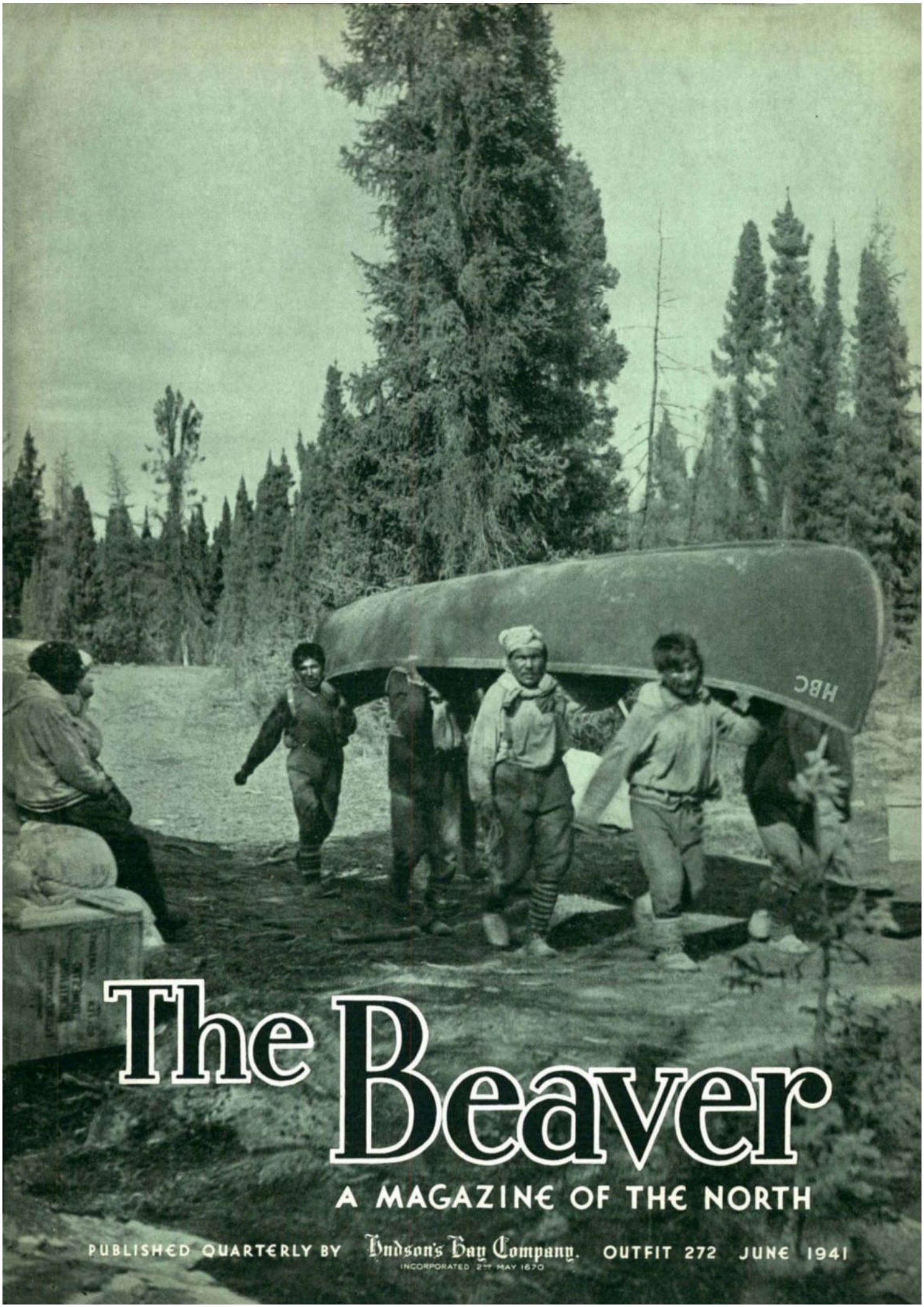
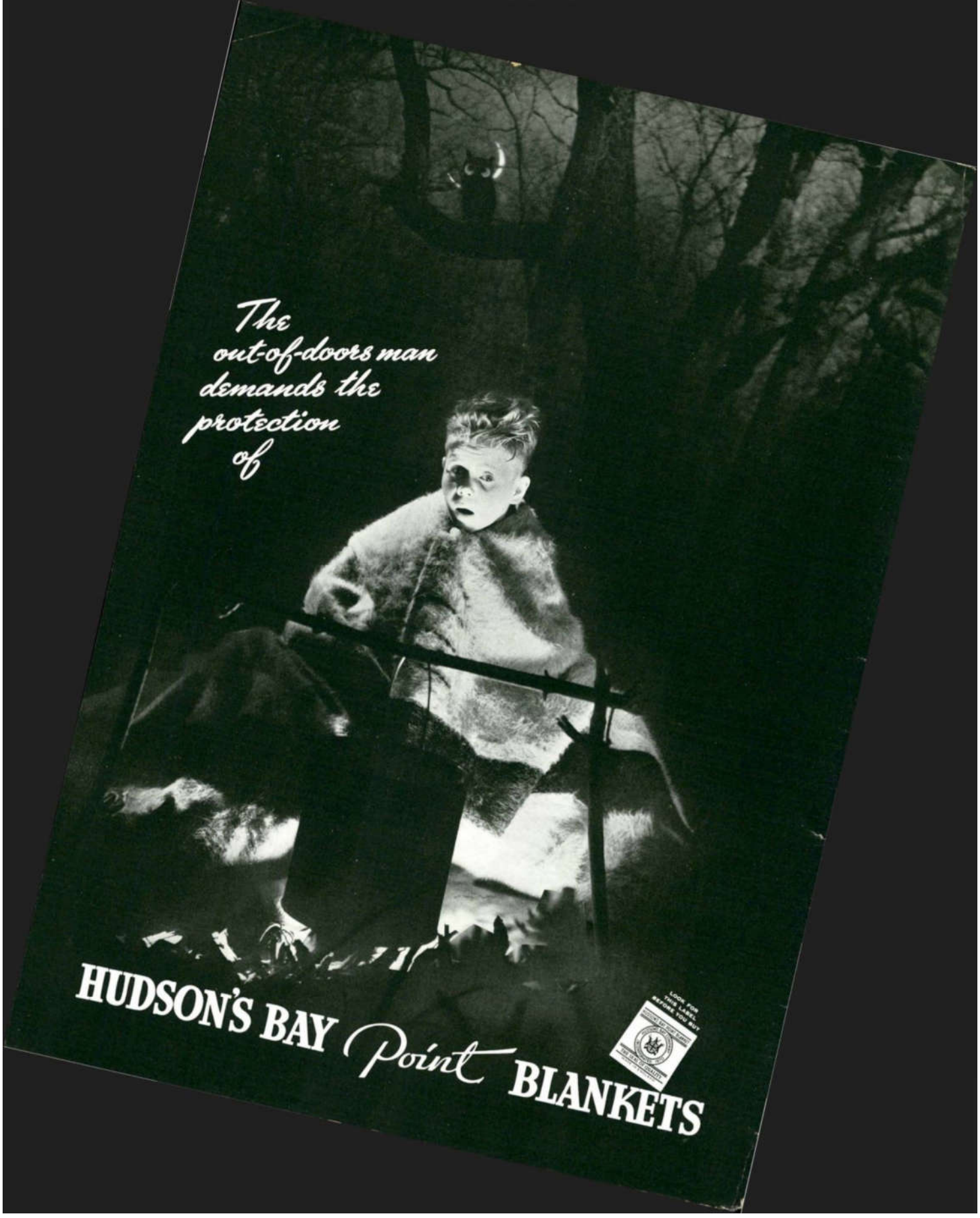


The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY Hudson's Bay Company. OUTFIT 272 JUNE 1941
INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670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By Sternwheeler to the Arctic

Josephine Robertson
Cleveland, Ohio

One of the Company sternwheelers at the entrance to Lake Athabaska. R.C.A.F.

IT was on the morning of June 5, 1940, at Waterways, Alberta, that my young son Donald and I began a most unusual vacation, during which we travelled by stern-wheel steamer and Eskimo schooner, some eighteen hundred miles through the rivers and lakes of the North, to the Arctic Ocean.

At Waterways, end of the railway line from Edmonton, the Hudson's Bay Company—which until then had been for us a formidable name in history, or a blanket of extra quality—came to life in the person of H. N. Petty of Mackenzie River Transport. By him we were led to a hearty Canadian breakfast aboard the S.S. *Northland Echo*, which lay below in the Clearwater River.

Part of a long wall of bales and boxes destined for the posts served by M.R.T. They are stacked in the shipping room of Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg.

Afterwards, we inspected the neat white ship, fragrant with the spruce logs in its hold, and watched the freight come down the conveyor belt, as men loaded the barge which was bound north with us.

We walked among huge disks for crushing rock at Goldfields, saw men roll oil drums down the river bank onto barges as if they were bowling, visited a company engaged in tapping the vast salt deposit under the town, and another which extracted oil from the black, tarry oil sands that outcropped along streams of the vicinity. It seemed that here at railroad's end we were at the edge of the land of the future, toward which civilization was making its first tentative move.

The sun shone gloriously next day. When it was still high our stern wheel began to turn, the smoke stack puffed rhythmically, and we backed slowly away to the confluence of the Clearwater and the Athabaska. There we picked up a second barge and, swinging around, headed down toward Lake Athabaska.

It was delightfully peaceful, especially to one anxious to escape the strain of deadlines, rushing traffic and the general high pressure of a big city.

I noted that instead of keeping to the centre of the river, as seemed to me reasonable in order to avoid

hitting the banks, our boat zigzagged constantly, heading for one shore, then the other. Captain Owen Browne explained patiently that we were dodging sand bars.

How did he do it? By reading water as I would a book. Later I found that it was the same with Captain Donald Naylor, Mate Malcolm McDonald and Pilot Johnny Berens of the *Distributor*. They were all experts at reading the mysterious, ever-changing characters written on the face of the waters by wind and current. To learn to read water, they said, you watch it for a lifetime and then you are not always certain you read it aright.

Evening loitered in calmness and beauty, with spruce spires and clouds and late-flying birds shadowed on the water. At midnight a fog arose, so we tied to a tree until light came.

Crossing the end of Lake Athabaska, we came to Fort Chipewyan, a little white town perched on a red hill of pre-Cambrian rock, whose crannies were studded with bright wild flowers. From here, Sir Alexander Mackenzie had set out on his two great journeys of discovery—one in 1789 down the great river that now bears his name, the other in 1793 through the mountains to the Pacific. Here, too, Sir John Franklin had stayed for a while on his way to the Arctic. As this was the first trip of the season, everyone came down to the shore to greet the steamer, and gave us a good northern welcome that was repeated at every port of call on our way to the Arctic.

On we sailed into the reedy and temperamental river locally called Rocher, which sometimes flows one way and sometimes another, depending on the wind and the water level; then down the Slave River past its junction with the Peace until we came to Fort Fitzgerald. Beyond this no ship could go, because of the rapids.

Cargo and passengers were portaged by car and truck over a sandy road through jack-pine woods to Fort Smith, where the *Distributor*, a steamer similar to the *Northland Echo* but larger, was waiting.

By now we were pretty well acquanted with the other passengers. Among these was Chris Harding, retired H B C fur trader, who had established the posts at Herschel Island and Kittigazuit in the Western Arctic. While for us the dark, virgin forests that stretched immeasurably beyond the river banks were full of mystery, and the river trip was an adventure, for Mr. Harding romance had gone from the North with the hardships of early days. For him breaking a path and being the first meant romance. Most of us must be content with far less. For me comfort and romance are not incompatible.

Other Company men aboard were Chief Trader William Gibson, who is already well known to *Beaver* readers, Captain Ralph Summers of the *Fort Ross*, and Post Manager John Ross of Fort Norman.

With Mr. Harding was his tall, lean friend, J. H. Curle, a whimsical Briton with a ready fund of dry wit and with several books and a lifetime of travel to his credit. He told us he was in the process of completing his 2,000,000th mile, none of which was by plane. He also kept a record of his games of solitaire. While on the *Distributor* he passed his 87,000th game. Between him and the Hudson's Bay men with their tales of adventure we never lacked entertainment, even when we had to tie to the bank.

Above: Fort Simpson, at the junction of the Liard and Mackenzie Rivers, built in 1822 on the site of a former North-West Company fort, and named after the new governor. Left: Priests at Fort Simpson check the list of goods brought to them on the "Distributor." (Margaret Bourke-White, courtesy "LIFE.")

At the mouth of the Slave River we waited a while for the wind to die down, then entered Great Slave Lake, clean, sparkling and cold, with remnants of ice still rocking on its surface. Before the wind came up again we had found protection in Hay River at a post of the same name, where some Slave Indians lived.

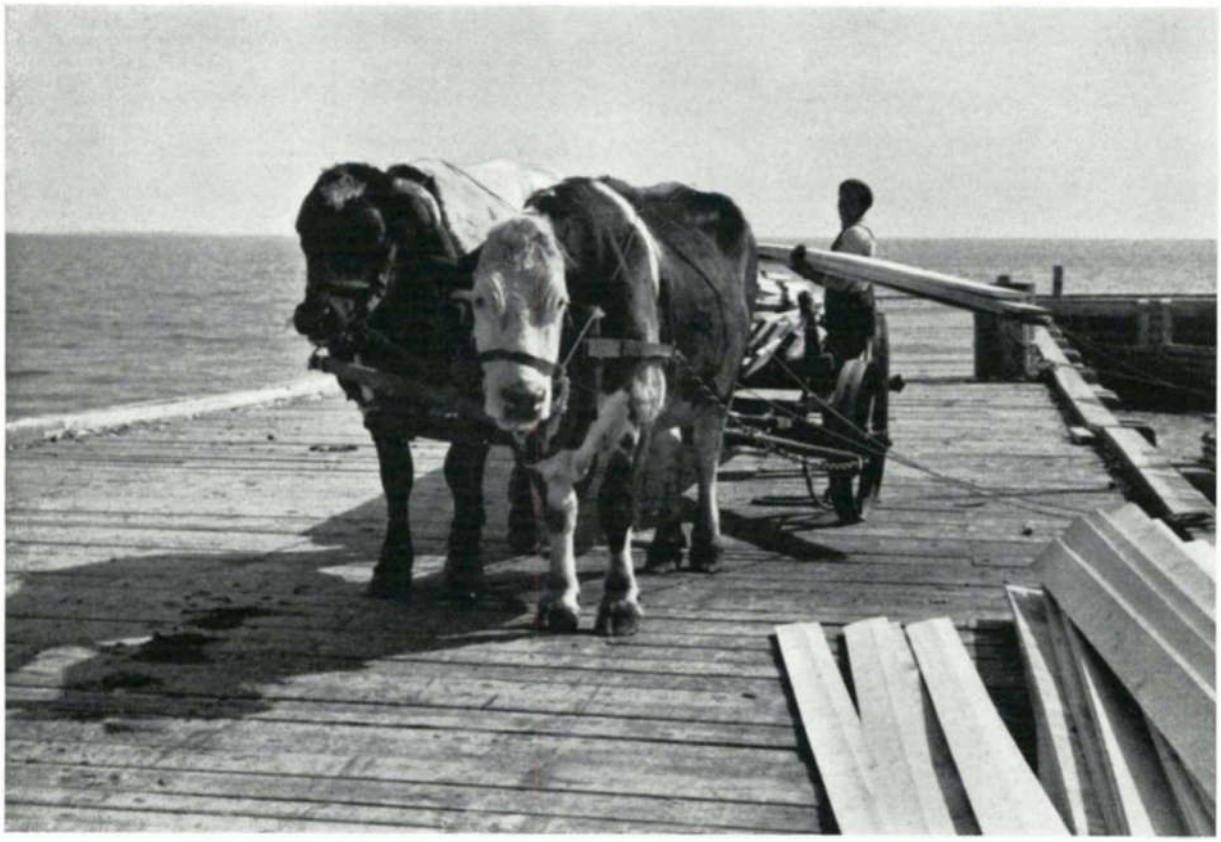
With Mrs. Sherman Shepherd, wife of the founder of All Saints school at Aklavik, and Miss Winifred Neville, an English nurse of Hay River, we visited some Indian cabins whose occupants lived in apparent contentment in the most simple, informal fashion. A catch of *inconnu* and white fish tossed on the floor by a stove made of an old oil drum; a grandmother sitting near, mending the fish net; a baby swinging in a hammock made of an old blanket and some moose hide; a mother who had just had her twelfth (she thought) child, lying in one of two broad, hard, wooden bunks; a rude table, a couple of chairs and supplementary packing boxes; a pile of clothing in a corner; several guns on the wall; an odor of fish, spruce, mingled with others of indeterminable origin—these seemed typical of the interior of a Slave Indian's cabin. Outside, along the narrow trails leading from house to house, were chained dogs tightly curled in sleep, and children shouting happily, playing ball with a tin can.

We met Frère Frank Moisan, a picturesque French churchman who wore black skirts, a black coat and a beard that rested on his chest. In the afternoon we visited his new wooden church gracefully ornamented inside with hand-carved wooden flowers. About eleven p.m. we attended a service in the Anglican Church, conducted by Rev. S. E. Richards and Rev. James Morris who was on his way to take charge of the parish at Fort Norman. Afterwards we had tea at the Richards' home.

The white people of the north are the most hospitable I have ever met. Almost all of them spare themselves no pains to make a stranger comfortable. At every post we were greeted as cordially as at Hay River. I never drank so much tea in my life. I never used to like it. The folks of Ohio don't seem to know the art of tea-making. But at every home we entered we were served the very best tea and cakes the house could afford. I came to like it and now invariably associate it with the friendliness of the Canadians of the Northwest Territories.

After leaving Hay River, the *Distributor* made her way westward along the shores of Great Slave Lake, and at its outlet, entered the great Mackenzie River. At Fort Providence, our next stop, we met the only mosquitoes of any importance during the whole summer. I had always been given the impression that northern mosquitoes were about as big as horses, sea horses at any rate, and that they could sting accordingly. So I left Cleveland prepared with an aromatic concoction of olive oil, pennyroyal, oil of cedar, oil of camphor and vinegar. On seeing the gray clouds of insects hovering over the banks of Providence, I anointed myself generously with oil and then entered the lounge on my way ashore. As I passed her, one lady sniffed and remarked, "My, how horrible! What

The "Distributor" and a barge tied up at one of the Mackenzie River posts. Lorene Squire.



These old reliables still survive in the transport system at Fort Resolution. Lorene Squire.

do I smell?" Eleven-year-old Donald obligingly replied, before I could make an exit. "That's my mother." I decided that the ointment was worse than the flies.

Providence, Simpson and Norman, all were interesting ports of call. I shall never forget the splendour of the night at Fort Norman. It was the usual diminutive village of white houses and red-roofed Hudson's Bay buildings, but dramatically situated at the roaring confluence of the Bear and Mackenzie rivers, in the austere shadow of Bear Rock which rose skyward for 1600 feet. The sun set at last, but darkness never came. For hours the vast reaches of the sky were filled with ranks of rosy clouds whose colour dyed the water and made the snowy mountains in the distance gleam like jewels, until at last a thin white streak on the horizon indicated that sundown was becoming sunup.

Every day the stop at a wood pile gave us pleasure in its opportunity for viewing the woods at close hand and in stretching our legs. Usually there was an empty cabin minus its window panes in the woods. A woodcutter habitually packs up his window panes with his luggage, we were told. Since wood is plentiful and glass scarce along the river, it is easier to provide a house for a window pane, than a window pane for a house.

What a vast, altogether incomprehensible amount of wood there was! A seemingly inexhaustible supply. Yet the people of the United States once thought that about their forests too. And now they are planting trees.

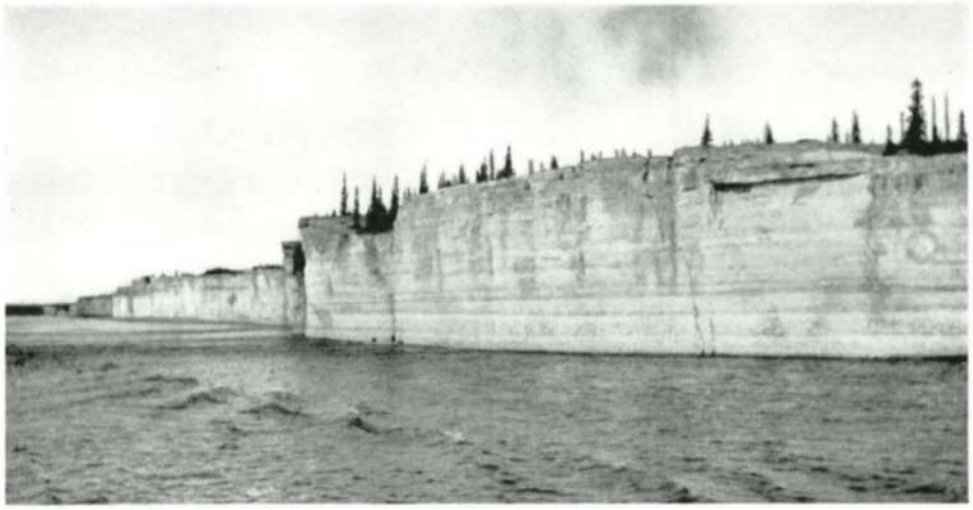
We looked into the mysterious depths of the spruce forest with high bush cranberry blooming white at its edges and the waxy flowers of pyrola lighting the shadows. But there was so much debris of fallen dead limbs that were spears and swords to the unseasoned walker that we did not stray far inside. Besides, we did not want the adventure of being lost.

Each day brought new interests. On June 17, toward evening we heard a throbbing in the sky, and from it descended the Company plane CF-BMI, landing like a water bird on the river. It carried Company representatives, who came aboard to greet us and to take our mail back south.

The next morning we were up to see the Ramparts—steep, cretaceous walls of a deep, narrow channel which the Mackenzie has cut in its rush to the sea. As we watched the mad rapids and the intricate currents and whirlpools that embroiled the water, we recalled thankfully that our ship was guided by men who understood such things.

After stopping at Fort Good Hope and Arctic Red River and many a woodpile, we came near midnight to Aklavik, the metropolis of the Canadian Arctic, but a very small spot in the labyrinthine delta of the magnificent Mackenzie. The sun, now shining night and day, glinted on the oil drums on the banks. As we neared shore we could see the faces of the inhabitants waiting for us. They had been listening for hours for the puffing of our funnel. Nearly every white resident came aboard to shake hands and converse. Ashore the Indians and Eskimos ripped open packing boxes containing oranges and apples. Adults and children ate the fruit on the spot.

It was our first sight of Eskimos. I was interested to note that these Eskimo women wear their dresses over their coats or parkas. The parka was so extremely commodious that it accommodated not only the



The ship passes close to the Mackenzie River Ramparts. Note the two men in the canoe. (H. C. Fisher.)

woman but often a child strapped to her back. It was evident that a lady Eskimo need exert no self-control in the matter of eating fats and starches, for a slim waist and a trim figure are lost under a parka.

Next day we had tea with Mrs. Charles Reiach, the post manager's wife, and with Dr. and Mrs. Leslie Livingstone and their niece, Miss Kay Joynt. We saw the Livingstone's hide-chinked cowshed and its bovine family, Ferdinand, Clementine and little Belinda, who enjoy the title of "farthest-north cows," and the chickens that won't come off their roosts in the dark days to lay eggs unless the doctor turns on the electric lights. It was amazing to see how comfortable and modern the Aklavik homes were with all the conveniences which electricity affords. Obviously there is vast living space in the north, even far beyond the Arctic Circle, and Canadians need not feel cramped for hundreds of years.

We saw Aklavik's fine hospitals and schools, Mrs. Kost's hotel, the radio station and the beautiful Anglican Cathedral where Canon Trevor Jones preaches three sermons on Sunday, for Eskimos, Indians and white folks respectively, and where muskrats skins are sometimes tossed into the collection plates.

After two days during which there was a dance and party aboard the *Distributor*, we left for Fort McPherson, on a steep bank of the Peel River, where old John Firth had ruled for half a century and was buried but two years or so ago. We looked at church records which went back seventy-five years and were shown the storied church into which an archdeacon and an Indian maid once entered and joined hands, declaring themselves married before God, and hoped that He would understand since there was no minister there to marry them and would not be for perhaps a year. Just to make sure matters were right, they were married again afterwards by the first minister who came to the post. That, at least, is the story.

During the brief stop at Aklavik I borrowed a caribou skin parka from Miss Helena Snowden, a missionary, to use on our trip to Tuktoyaktuk, commonly called Tuktuk. For, through the courtesy of Mr. Alfred Copland, transport manager in the Western Arctic, and Mrs. Copland, we were able to make definite plans to spend the summer at that post on the Arctic coast, just east of the Mackenzie Delta. The *Distributor* picked up two new passengers, Mrs. John Sidgewick, wife of the post manager at Tuktoyaktuk, who had been living at Aklavik for several months, and their new daughter, Barbara Joan. And we set out north again.

The *Moose River*, schooner of the Eskimo, Taylor Pokiak, went with us through the maze of the delta. Although we were almost to Beaufort Sea and far north of what is popularly considered the tree line, there were still gnarled spruces in sheltered coves. But at length we passed the last one. Where it was I don't know. Gradually realization came that we had reached the so-called barren lands about which I had read and wondered so often.

In the evening we tied up to a couple of deadmen sunk in a flat willow island near an old reindeer station. Spring had just arrived ahead of us. Heat waves blowing like gray grass were visible on the distant hilltops. Willows with the biggest catkins I have ever seen bloomed on the island, and smelled sweet like clover. Huge fuzzy bumble bees sailed over them. Hundreds of finches sang and flitted in the thickets, as busy as birds in an Ohio hay field. There was even a robin singing. It seemed a long way north for him.

Early on the morning of the fourth day we moved on to Kittigazuit, an abandoned post, where driftwood lay white on the beach and the bones of dead Eskimos bleached on the tundra in the graveyard crowning the bluffs. In this graveyard was the most delightful expanse of wild flowers I have ever seen—white heather, purple rhododendron, creamy dryads, shining yellow buttercups and cinquefoil, rosy pink armeria, lousewort both magenta and straw-coloured, and even very small orchids of the coralroot group. Here larks and ptarmigan nested. Inadvertently I flushed a ptarmigan hen from her nest which contained six newly hatched, downy, greenish chicks, and some eggs. As I watched she returned to beat her wings over them and scatter them in all directions. Then she scolded me and her husband joined her in the rebuke.

One evening after work, Malcolm McDonald took us to White Fish Station a few miles away, where we learned that the white fish were much bigger than those caught in Lake Erie. Indeed, they turned out to be whales! We went by way of the ocean, but as a blow had come up by the time we were ready to return,

we took an inside passage which was very picturesque, especially since the water was half clogged with candle ice which fell down like nine pins as we passed, clinking musically as a Tom Collins and shining with a splendid sheen.

On the evening of July 3, when the freight was all battened down on the shore, Donald and I, with Mr. Gibson, boarded the *Moose River* and left the *Distributor*, which a few hours later returned to Aklavik. At Tuktoyaktuk Mr. Copland and Mr. Gibson gave us permission to live in a cabin once occupied by a radio operator. We burned driftwood which we gathered from the beaches for fuel, together with a little coal; cut the very fine bread, baked for us by Mr. Sidgewick, with an Eskimo snow knife; ate bully beef, fresh fish from the nets, and once a reindeer steak; drank Fort Garry tea; watched the Banks Islanders trade their white foxes; made an expedition to the "pingos" or "bingos," those strange mounds that are landmarks on the coast; saw a bearded-seal hunt, and a white whale with a calf; learned to love the howling of the four hundred dogs on the sandspit, the fine sea air and the sun that never set; in fact we spent a most delightful summer.

We returned to Aklavik by schooner in time to catch the *Distributor* on its last trip south. It was a welcome sight, like a friend of years' acquaintance. The return was no anticlimax. By day the forests were rich with colour as stained glass windows, and by night the northern lights poured up from the horizon and dropped shimmering, iridescent curtains to light our way, while the sparks from our smokestack fell into a river strewn with the reflections of stars.

So we bid goodbye to the Arctic—goodbye to the friendly Hudson's Bay people and Eskimos and Indians, and that strangely beautiful land under the midnight sun. Back up the historic river we steamed by night and day, past its white forts set like beacons of hospitality in the wilderness; and so at last we came again to the railhead at Waterways.

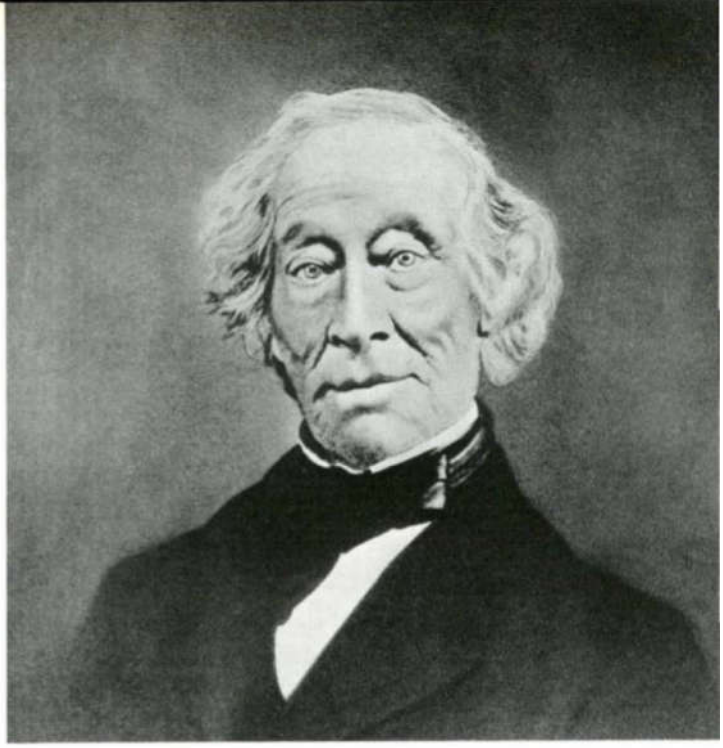
It was a grand trip and a grand experience. And this summer, Donald and I will be wishing pretty hard that we were voyaging again on the white sternwheeler, bound north down the storied Mackenzie.

An Eskimo whaleboat and schooners off Tuktuk. R. N. Hourde.

JOHN TOD

by F. Henry Johnson
Vancouver, B.C.

One of the old race of Scots factors, John Tod was a fine representative of those fearless men who ruled the wilderness under the Crown a century ago.



This portrait of Tod well illustrates Bancroft's description of him given below. (B.C. Archives).

JOHN Tod was of that small but select company of hardy spirits whose enterprise made them lords of the west. In his span of almost ninety years he lived the history of the far western province.

All who knew Tod in those early days were impressed by his Scots shrewdness, his quick wit and his undoubted courage. Few men so well understood the psychology of the savage. To the Indians he was a man to be respected and feared. There was a superstition that they could not kill him, and none could outwit him. In his vast wilderness he was an unecrowned king.

His appearance was singularly impressive. He was tall and gaunt, with quite long curly hair. Bancroft, who knew him personally in later life, has left us in his *History of British Columbia* this classic description: "Above a broad straight Scotch nose, and high cheek bones were glittering gray eyes, which flashed perpetual fun and intelligence. And the mouth! Had the mouth been small the mighty brain above it would have burst; as it was, the stream of communication once set flowing, every limb and fibre of the body talked: the blazing eyes, the electrified hair, and the well-poised tongue all dancing attendance. It was a trick the early fur traders fell into, that of copying from savagism its aids to declamation."

John Tod was born in 1794 by the "bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond," the eldest of a large family. In March 1813, while still in his teens, he heard that young men were being recruited in Glasgow for service with the Hudson's Bay Company. Here, he thought, was his opportunity, and he left home. As a parting gift his father gave him a little money and three books, the Bible, Burns' Poems, and Buchan's *Medicine*. These "three B's," as Tod called them, were henceforth his inseparable companions on all his travels across mountain and plain. Tod signed on with the Company for four years at twenty pounds a year and a yearly increase of five pounds.

The young man soon learned that he was one of a party of sixteen to be sent to the Red River colony. In June 1813, the party sailed first to Stornaway in the Hebrides, where six weeks later they boarded the Company's own ship and set sail for Hudson's Bay. The voyage was noteworthy, according to Tod, only for the monotony of the diet. There was far too much porridge even for their highland palates. When they arrived at York Factory Tod and another lad were made apprentice clerks and the rest of the party was sent on to Red River.

That winter Tod was assigned to his first post, Fort Severn, two hundred miles southeast of York Factory. This distance had to be covered on foot, using snowshoes. For the journey the young Scot had exchanged his homespun for the clothing of the Hudson's Bay trader. Reminiscing in later life, Tod gave his friend Sproat a colourful word picture of this costume: "Light blue was the company's colour, worn in this time of winter over a leather, flannel lined doublet, worsted scarlet waist belt, smoked buckskin breeches, blue cloth leggings up to the knee, under which were three rolls of blanket socks encased in moose moccasins. This soft and yielding, though tough footgear, by not impeding the circulation, lessened the risk of freezing which the use of hard leather boots would have caused. Hanging my buckskin mittens to a cord from my neck to prevent them being lost, and throwing a familiar Scotch plaid over my shoulder, I was ready for the journey barring the snowshoes." That journey was no easy introduction to the rigours of travel in the northwest.

In 1816 Tod was encouraged to learn that he had been promoted to the rank of a full-fledged clerk and had been ordered to take charge of Fort Severn. It is difficult for us in this age of radio to realize how remote, at that time, was even this post on Hudson Bay. Great events had been transpiring in Europe. The Emperor and his Old Guard had been swept from the field of Waterloo, but it was not until four years later that the young clerk at Fort Severn heard the news and celebrated the event by a volley from the fort's cannon which shattered the silence of the wilderness.

In 1821 he was promoted trader and appointed in charge of the fur shed at York Factory. Here he was present at the epochal banquet given by the authorities of the Hudson's Bay and former North-West Companies to celebrate the union of the two rival organizations. It was a bizarre scene. Uniforms of Hudson's Bay blue mingled with the buckskins and feathers of

the Cree braves, the half savage, half European costumes of traders from the west and the attire of the London gentlemen. The old animosity between Hudson's Bay men and Northwesters simmered dangerously, and only the demonstrative comradeship of the leading officers of each company saved the situation.

Two years later, John Tod was sent to take charge of solitary Fort McLeod in New Caledonia. Thus began his long and adventurous career in what is now British Columbia. This region west of the Rockies had been a North-West Company preserve, and Tod was the first Hudson's Bay man to go there. To the servants of the Company, New Caledonia in those days was Ultima Thule. For two thousand miles Tod travelled by canoe, going by way of Ile à la Crosse, the Athabasca River and Peace River to reach Fort McLeod. Here by the shores of McLeod Lake, he spent the nine loneliest years of his life.

Tod complained that he was half starved while at Fort McLeod. When employed in the Hudson's Bay region he had always had sufficient provisions, but the food supply was now an ever-acute problem. In 1828 Tod was visited at Fort McLeod by Governor Simpson and a party of twenty. The only food he could offer his guests was dried berries and a part of a dog. Simpson desired to know why Tod had no fresh fish from the lake. Tod explained that, because of the freshets, there was no fishing at that time. He admitted that he had seed potatoes which the Company had instructed him not to eat, and later, when he found Simpson's servant carrying off a bag of these, Tod knocked him down. An impromptu court was held and the trader was ordered to pay the assaulted servant five shillings in goods. He refused unless the court furnished him with a certified copy of the minutes and proceedings, stating his own defense and all the circumstances. The matter was dropped.

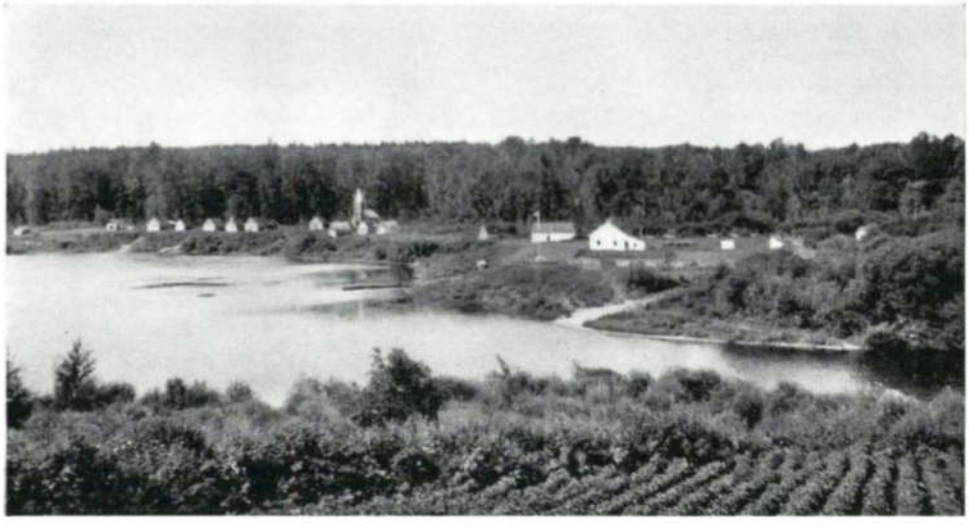
Though Tod himself seems to have had little trouble with the Indians at Fort McLeod, yet the natives throughout New Caledonia about that time had been obstreperous on more than one occasion. Just before his arrival here, two French Canadians had been murdered by Indians at nearby Fort George. That Tod had already learned those qualities of boldness, tact and cunning which won him the respect of the savage is illustrated by an incident which occurred at McLeod. A band of Sikanni braves were visiting Tod, and he had invited them to seat themselves in the large "general room" of the fort while he went out to the store building to procure the usual hospitable offering of tobacco. While Tod was out he had other visitors—a band of Beaver Indians from the Peace River. For some time there had been a feud between Sikannis and Beavers, and when Tod returned to his general room he found the feud in full swing with rather disastrous effects to the premises. Tod saw red. He dashed in, knocking Indians right and left, seizing their weapons and throwing them into the huge fireplace. He ordered them to stop fighting, and they did. Then, after an angry speech denouncing them for breaking the respected Indian laws of hospitality, he persuaded them to forget their feud, and smoke the pipe of peace.

In May 1832 he left McLeod's Lake and returned to York Factory. Here his discontent was soothed by the promise of a commission as soon as there was a suitable vacancy. In the meantime he served temporarily at York Factory and at various posts in that region. The change was a great tonic to Tod. Here he could eat, drink and be merry again with his friends of former days. Finally, in the spring of 1834, he was commissioned as a Chief Trader. This meant, financially, that he had a partnership interest worth about six hundred pounds a year, and the right to a year's leave. To Tod, it certainly seemed that life had begun at forty.

He immediately took advantage of the leave and embarked for England. On the boat with him was a Miss Wanklin, who seems to have had some connection with the Company, since she made periodical voyages between England and Hudson's Bay. They became acquainted, and met again in London, where they were married. Their honeymoon was spent on a short visit to Scotland to see Tod's family, and then the couple returned to America via New York, arriving there in January 1836.

After a winter spent in Montreal, Tod was sent to take charge of Oxford House. Here, after giving birth to a daughter, his wife developed a mental affliction. He finally found it necessary to take both mother and child back to England and leave them with his wife's relatives there.

The summer of 1838 found Tod heading west again from Norway House in charge of a large party of sixty



They still grow potatoes at McLeod's Lake post.

bound for Fort Vancouver. Here he stayed but a short time under the patriarchal Dr. John McLoughlin, and then continued north to take charge of the Company's farm at Cowlitz Plain. This was a situation about seventy miles north of Fort Vancouver. It is the site to-day of the first church in the state of Washington, built in 1839. Here there was a large horse park, one thousand acres in cultivation, a considerable number of cattle and a large dairy. Eight thousand bushels of wheat and four thousand of oats were harvested the first year, in addition to crops of barley and potatoes. Adjacent to the farm was a Catholic mission. The farm produce was sold by the Company to the Russian fur posts in Alaska, and to the incoming Oregon settlers.

Two years later we find Tod back again in New Caledonia at Alexandria. This fort was a large stockaded enclosure with a block house, the customary small cannon, a heavy front gate, and the usual squared log buildings within. It was built close to the bank of the Fraser against a dark backdrop of pines.

At Fort Alexandria in March 1841 Tod received the news of the murder by an Indian of Samuel Black, the trader at Kamloops. He immediately left for the deserted fort, and took charge of the long, relentless manhunt. The murderer was finally tracked down, and was drowned when he overturned the canoe in which his captors were ferrying him across the Thompson River at Savona. Tod had rounded up the murderer by the simple expedient of enlisting the aid of the Kamloops Indians and offering a bale of goods as a reward.

Realizing his value as a "trouble shooter" and conscious that the Thompson country had more than its quota of Indian troubles, the Company transferred Tod to Kamloops. Here the chief trader began immediately the construction of a new fort to replace the very dilapidated buildings built by the North-Westers in 1812.

The boundary change occasioned by the Oregon Treaty of 1846 led the Hudson's Bay Company to transfer many horses from Cowlitz to Kamloops, where several hundred were required for the fur brigade. This impressive cavalcade of four or five hundred horses annually carried the furs of New Caledonia via Fort Alexandria, Kamloops and the Okanagan valley, down to the Columbia, where boats carried them over the last lap to Fort Vancouver. The brigade was composed of contingents from each post en route, each post officer being in charge of his own contingent.

Lolo, and his family, standing against one of the buildings at Fort Kamloops. It was Lolo who gave warning of the threatened Indian attack on the fort, which Tod forestalled by his "smallpox" ruse. (B.C. Archives.)

Horses were an important factor in the economy of Fort Kamloops. Not only were they required for the fur brigade, but next to dried salmon, horse meat was the chief food of the establishment.

In 1847 occurred the famous "smallpox" incident, when Tod stopped an Indian war party planning to attack his post, by galloping out to meet them and warning them that smallpox had broken out in Kamloops, and that he had come to save his Indian friends by vaccinating them. He then took out his vaccine and proceeded to inoculate the cowed but grateful warriors with his tobacco knife on their right arms. What an effective method of achieving disarmament!

Only the next year Tod's cunning saved Kamloops again from a threatened attack by Chief Nicola and his band of Indians. On this occasion Tod captured one of Nicola's scouts and disclosed to him how he proposed to blow up Nicola and the whole countryside with the large stores of gunpowder he had in the fort. The Indian scout was set free and Nicola's men stayed home. These incidents made the name of John Tod an almost legendary one in the interior of British Columbia. The "Old Fox," the Indians called him.

About 1848 Tod at last saw his way clear to leave the service and realize the dream he had so long cherished of retiring and living a life of ease as a "gentleman farmer." At Fort McLeod he had pictured himself on a farm in Upper Canada, but by now the west was in his blood and it was to the infant colony of Vancouver Island that he preferred to go. At Fort Victoria he could enjoy a matchless climate and, what he always loved, the companionship of his old friends of the fur trade. Near the fort he purchased land on the shore of Cadboro Bay and built the first house in what is now the municipality of Oak Bay. From here he was able to look across the blue waters of the strait at the snow-capped Olympic Range and bask in Victoria's sunshine.

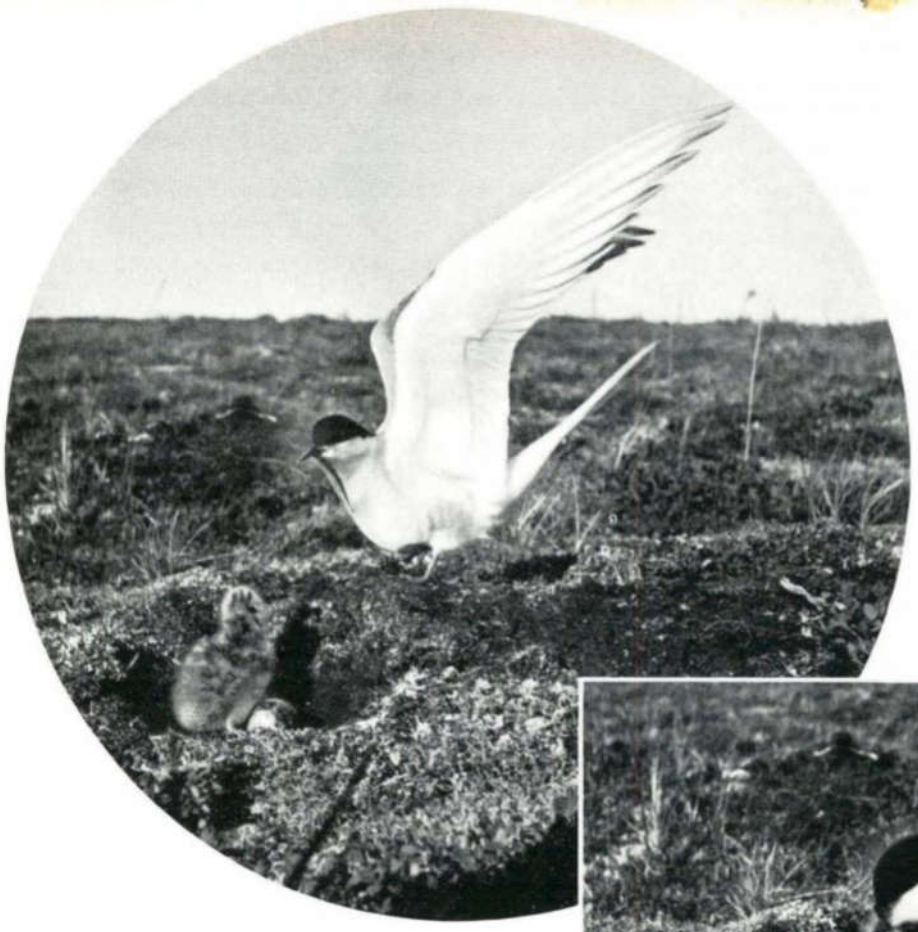
In 1851 Blanshard, the harassed first governor of the colony of Vancouver Island, resigned and, prior to leaving Victoria, appointed a provisional council of three, James Douglas, James Cooper and John Tod. In March 1853 the Hon. John Tod was appointed one of a committee of two to see to the erection of Victoria's first school-house. He resigned from the council on October 11, 1858, but took an active part in the public life of the colony as a justice of the peace and as chairman of the Board of Road Commissioners from 1861 to 1864.

From then on Tod lived a life of ease and enjoyment, surrounded by his books and his friends and his music, at his home on Cadboro Bay. Death came to the old trader on August 31, 1882. Few men, even of his vocation, had led a fuller life. In his latter days he had the satisfaction of knowing this, and he told Sproat, "In the frontier career, many aspects of which were sordid and disappointing, there must have been some goodly flavour, for I have heard not a few old men in the Service say that they did not regret having entered it. The pitting of your wit against the savage—the retreat from conventions, the outdoor life, the possibleness of adventure, even the danger in it all, together with the gratified instinct of the hunter and naturalist, with of course, the prospect of acquiring a modest competency in middle life—these perhaps in some degree account for the satisfaction thus expressed."

The author acknowledges the assistance he has received in the preparation of this article from the B.C. Provincial Archives and the University of B.C.

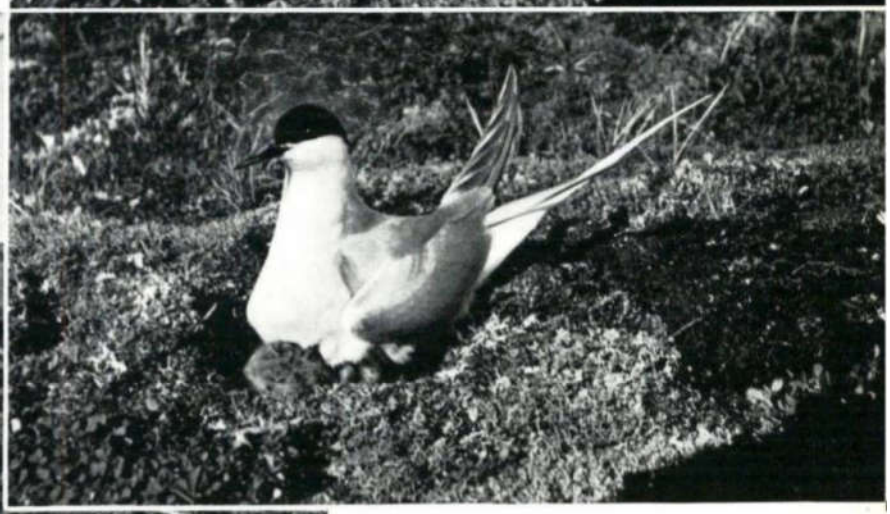
BIRDS at CHURCHILL

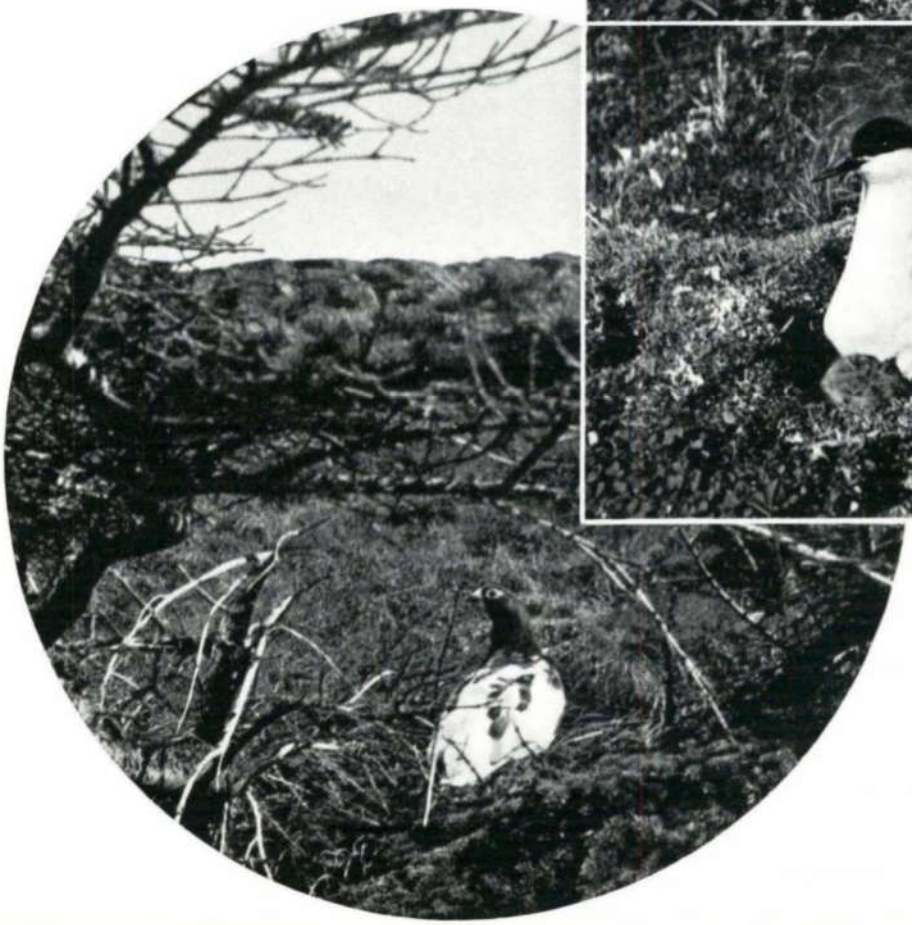
by Albert L. Wilk
Edmonton



Left: An Arctic tern lands beside her nest on the tundra. Having produced one chick, she has laid another egg, believing in the old adage that one good tern . . .

No food this trip—just a lot of squawking. . . . So the chick settles down for a snooze and hopes father will bring home the fish that got away last time.





The brilliant colours of the male ptarmigan lure marauders away from the breeding female.

When the METIS REBELLED

PUBLIC NOTICE TO THE INHABITANTS OF RUPERTS LAND.

The President and Representatives of the French-speaking population of Rupert's Land in Council, (the Invaders of our rights being now expelled) already aware of your sympathy, do extend the hand of friendship to you our friendly Fellow Inhabitants, and in doing so invite you to send twelve Representatives from the following places, viz.

St. John's 1, St. Margret's 1. Headingly 1, St. James 1, St. Mary's 1, Kildonan 1, St. Paul's 1, St. Andrew's 1, St. Clement's 1, St. Peter's 1, Town of Winnipeg 2 in order to form one body with the above Council consisting of twelve members to consider the present political state of this Country, and to adopt such measures as may be deemed best for the future welfare of the same.

A meeting of the above Council will be held in the Court House at Fort Garry on Tuesday the 16th day of November at which the invited Representatives will attend.

By order of the President,
LOUIS RIEL,
Secy.

Winnipeg Nov. 6th 1869.

Notice from Riel, calling a meeting in the Court House at Fort Garry on Nov. 16. The word "Fellow" was possibly added by Riel himself. Bown refused to print this in the "Nor'Wester" office, and was held prisoner there while Riel's men ran it off. The English and French inhabitants each sent 12 delegates, who were welcomed at the fort by a salute of 24 guns. (Courtesy of C. M. Taylor, Esq.)

THE following first-hand accounts of the Riel Insurrection of '69, when Fort Garry was seized by the half-breeds, have recently come to light. Two of the letters were penned inside the fort while it was in Riel's possession. They were written by J. J. Hargrave (son of Letitia Hargrave, whose letters from York Factory appeared in *The Beaver* last year) to William McMurray, whose daughter, Mrs. E. W. Mermagen, of Winnipeg, has kindly given permission for their reproduction. The other two, written by Chief Factor Robert Campbell and by Ewen McDonald, were found at abandoned Fort Pelly.

When a sudden spring rainstorm forced Indian Agent James Walls of Swan River district to take shelter in the aging fort, he discovered the faded blue papers. Raymond Ruppert of Pullman, Washington, sent copies of them to *The Beaver*, and they are here reproduced by permission of Mrs. J. D. Ruttan of Winnipeg, grand-daughter of Chief Factor Campbell and grand-niece of Mr. McDonald.

Fort Garry, Red River,
10 December, 1869.

William McMurray, Esq.,
Athabasca.

My dear Sir:

I doubt not you will hear from all your correspondents the serious position in which we are situated here at present.

On the 1 Instant the transfer of this country to Canada was to take effect. The Hon. Wm. Macdougall, C.B., was the gentleman nominated as Governor by Canada. He and some members of his Executive Council arrived at Pembina some weeks previous to the date in question with the object I presume of seeing the colony for a short time as a private individual before his commission should take effect. He was however stopped by an armed body of halfbreeds at Pembina, and compelled to retreat into Yankee territory. Here he stayed on Peter Hayden's farm until 1 December, when he sent down Colonel Dennis—the head of his surveying staff—with the Royal Proclamation appointing him Governor.

Meanwhile this Fort had been seized by the halfbreeds who armed themselves at the expense of the Company and held the position in spite of the Governor's [William Mactavish's] remonstrances. The nominal leader is Johnny Bruce—brother of Baptiste [see Dec. 1940 *Beaver*, p. 24]—the real man is his so-called secretary—Louis Riel. These men have set up a thing they call the "Republic of the Halfbreeds" and they profess an intention of levying overdue customs accounts and other assets of the Governor, and Council of Assiniboia, which they claim to have displaced. They have seized the Land Register and public accounts by force from the hands of McTavish and have seized Bachelor's Hall and all the rooms over the office as their offices and bedrooms.

When Colonel Dennis came down, on 1 inst., he seized the Lower Fort in the Queen's name and attempted to raise and drill a force to retake this fort. His basis of operations up here was at [Dr.] Schultz's, where about 40 Canadians had assembled for mutual support and defence. But on Tuesday last, Riel and 600 of his men went down and forced that garrison to surrender at discretion. Schultz, [Charles] Mair, and their wives, and about 40 others are therefore at this moment prisoners at Fort Garry—their property is seized, and a court martial is going to be held on them, as soon as a party returns which was sent to Pembina on Tuesday night to see Governor Macdougall fairly off or shoot him. Wm. Hallett is among the other prisoners here—Dennis has given up the game, but is still at the Lower Fort.

A late "Lay Brother" from St. Boniface named O'Donoghue is Riel's chief helper. The Priests are all favorable to the movement. Bishop Taché is at Rome.

It is thought that these events will do for next year's Portage La Loche transport, as no one will go and besides half breed plain hunters are called in to fight in Spring. It is inevitable that troops must come and of course Fort Garry will go for it.

The Settlement is in a miserable state of fright.

The sum paid by Canada to the Coy. is to be divided at once among the stockholders and along with the Puget Sound and Oregon claims, which have also been settled, it is believed will give a bonus of about £4.4.0 for share of £20. Of course the Fur Trade partners get none of it.

The Governor has been confined to his house all the autumn. I have never seen him so bad as he is now and fear he will not remain any longer in the service. He speaks of resigning office, but, so far as I know, has not yet done so.

You will be sorry to learn of the death of poor Mr. Wilson at York. Mr. B. R. Ross [see Dec. 1940 *Beaver*, p. 6] goes down by winter packet to take his place.

I think all our affairs are going to the bad. These interruptions can hardly go on without seriously damaging the trade.

Riel today hoisted the flag of the Republic on the Fort flagstaff amid salutes of artillery and musketry and the tunes played by the band of St. Boniface school.

It is said Fenianism and Yankee conspiracy have much to do with the present state of the colony.

The *Nor'Wester* office has been seized, the press confiscated, and Bown [the owner] has escaped to Lower Fort Garry. Coldwell and Ross [ex-proprietors of the *Nor'Wester*] are back again and have established a paper called the *Pioneer*—but the first issue was confiscated and the office is held by the Insurgents.

I enclose copy of the Proclamation issued by Governor Mactavish which sets forth the principal events in the earlier stages of the rebellion.

With kind regards,

I remain, my dear sir,
Very faithfully yours,
J. J. HARGRAVE.

Fort Garry, Red River,
14 March, 1870.

William McMurray, Esquire.
Fort Chipewyan.

Dear Sir:

I am sorry to say that the illness under which my uncle [Governor Mactavish] at present labours has been so severe that he is totally incapacitated from attending to business and will probably leave Red River for Europe so soon as the warm weather will admit of his travelling. You must therefore not be surprised at receiving no letter from him by this opportunity. He is so weak as to be scarcely able to sign his name.

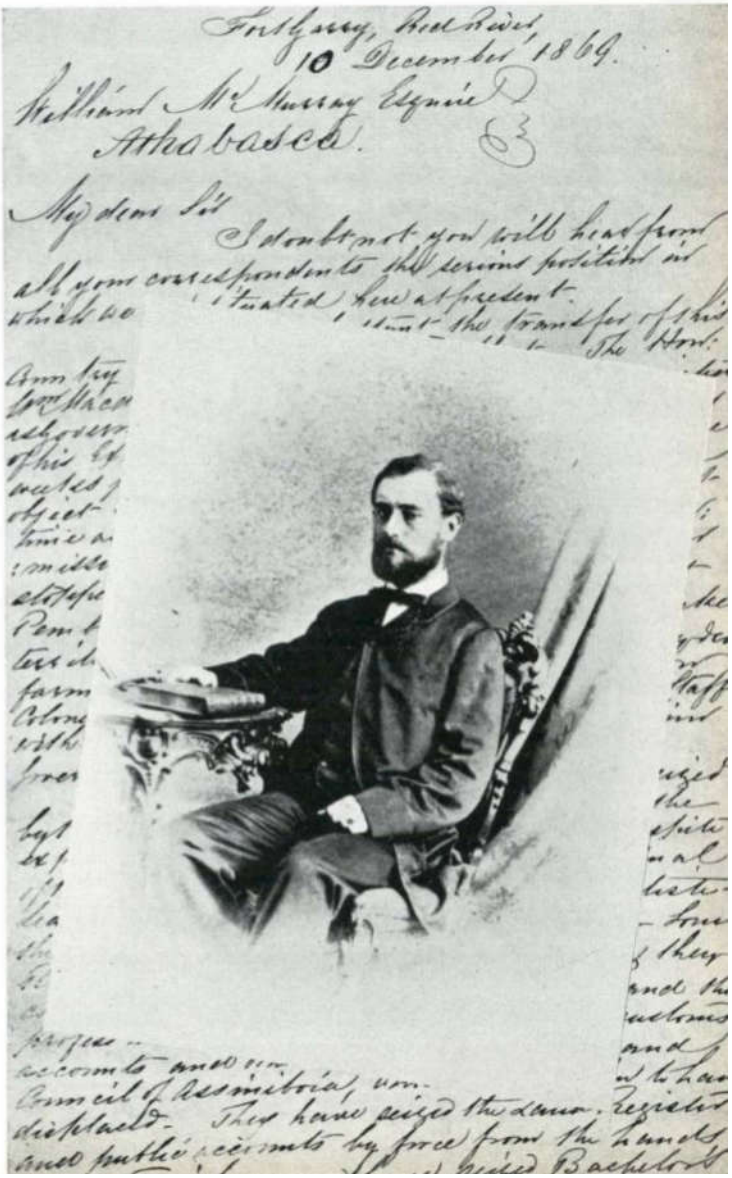
You will probably learn from other sources that towards the end of December the Rev. Mr. Thibeault and Colonel De Salaberry were sent by the Canadian Government to use their influence in allaying the excitement among the half-breeds. Chief Factor Smith [later Lord Strathcona] was also sent up as commissioner to ascertain the wishes of the people. C. T. [Chief Trader] Hardisty came up with him as a private friend.

After much delay a public meeting took place towards the end of January at which it was agreed to hold a convention of twenty English and twenty French members to consider the questions at issue. After about a fortnight's work the convention drew up a "Bill of Rights" which was committed to the charge of Mr. Smith to be laid before the Canadian Government. A "Provisional Government" was also inaugurated as a temporary measure to secure the public peace until definite arrangements shall have been made for the government of the Territory. Delegates from the people of this place were also appointed to go to Ottawa, who will start I believe during the present week along with Messrs. Smith, Hardisty and De Salaberry, who have been prevented by a series of events from leaving until this late date.

Bishop Taché, who had hurried out from Rome on hearing of the disturbed state of the country, arrived here last week. It is generally understood he came invested with certain powers from Canada. What these powers may be I cannot tell, as the bishop has been detained a prisoner in his own house, since his arrival. They cannot however be final as the bishop is quite understood to concur in the advisability of sending the delegates. These are the Revd. Mr. Ritchot and Mr. Scott, a clerk in the store of Mr. McKenney; Judge Black declined going for private reasons, and I am not sure whether anyone will be deputed in his stead.

Besides Riel who is of course the president of the Provisional Government, the principal officials are Mr. Thomas Bunn, Secretary, Mr. William O'Donoghue, Treasurer, and Mr. James Ross, Judge. There are at present about fifty political prisoners in their hands,

J. J. Hargrave, author of "Red River," and secretary and nephew of Governor Mactavish. This is the first page of his letter of Dec. 10.


Fortgarry, Red River
10 December 1869.
William McMurray Esquire
Athabasca.
My dear Sir
I doubt not you will hear from
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the
Hon.

Fort Pelly on the Assiniboine, where Campbell's and McDonald's letters were found.

but it is thought probably many of these will soon be released. Fort Garry has been declared their Head Quarters, and indeed they now occupy the whole of it. They have taken possession of all the depots and stores as well as the dwelling houses with the exception of the public office, the houses occupied by my uncle, Mr. John McTavish and Balsillie. A large permanent guard has been placed at White Horse Plain, and Pembina; Lower Fort Garry and Portage la Prairie are visited from time to time by flying parties.

It is said that parties have already left the settlement fully empowered by the Provisional Government to urge all the halfbreeds in Swan River, Saskatchewan, and Cumberland Plain Districts to visit this place in spring, and in the meantime to take all the posts in these districts, and carry away the provisions and furs in store.

It is likewise reported that a party will visit Portage la Loche in summer and carry away the returns of Athabasca and McKenzie River, and doubtless also those of the forts upon the route.

The Hudson's Bay Company has sent out no instructions whatever for the guidance of their agents in his country in the very critical circumstances in which we are placed, and it will be incumbent on every officer in charge of a district to take such measures as may seem to him best for the preservation of the Company's property, and the export of his returns. Detailed plans of action drawn up here under present circumstances would be worse than useless.

The Northern Council for 1870 will be held at Norway House, to which place the officers who attend it will require to make the best of their way at the usual season.

Mr. John McTavish forwards to you a fyle of the issue of the *New Nation* newspaper, which, will afford you full and very correct information regarding details of current events.

Meanwhile, Chief Factor Campbell, of Pelly-Yukon fame, sent a circular letter out to the posts from Fort Pelly. Here are some extracts:

"Mr. George Davis left the Portage [la Prairie] on the 8th of February last for Lower Ft. Garry and since has neither been seen nor heard from. Fort Garry, St. Boniface, Lower Ft. Garry, White Horse Plains and Oakpoint post have been seized and pillaged by the French half-breeds and some of the officers of the HBC made prisoners.

"On the 5th March, Donald A. Smith, Chief Factor, Commissioner from Canada, was at the Portage persuading the people to submit to Louis Riel and his self-constituted government. Mr. Smith said it was better to submit quietly and by so doing prevent bloodshed. He told the people he felt assured that sometime during the summer, troops would be sent into the country and that then a proper government would be formed and law and order restored.

"During the month of February a Convention sat composed of 40 delegates—20 French and 20 English—chosen to represent the different parishes in the Settlement for the purpose of considering the state of the country and devising the best means for restoring peace and order. After sitting 15 days and being bullied and humbugged by the French party, Louis Riel cut the sitting short by starting up and declaring that if he was not immediately chosen governor of the "Nor'-west Territory and Ruperts Land" that he would declare war. This was immediately put to a vote and carried, a large majority of the English and all the French members voting for Louis Riel to be their governor. A government was then formed consisting of a council composed of 24 members. James Ross 'Esquire' was appointed Judge and Recorder of Ruperts Land and most graciously accepted the honor conferred on him. A number of magistrates JC were then appointed and anarchy and rapine now prevail much to the satisfaction of the Red River people.

"A Scotchman named Scott who came into the Settlement two years ago was shot for attempting to rescue some of the Canadians who are detained prisoners by Riel and men. Early in December last Louis Riel was swaggering about the town and somehow came in contact with Scott. A quarrel arose which ended in a fight when the blustering Frenchman got a good licking and had to sneak off the fort, swearing vengeance at some future day. When Dr. Schultz and party were taken prisoners, Scott was one of them but he managed to break prison and escaped. When the party from the Portage came down to attempt the rescue of the Canadians held in captivity by Louis Riel, Scott was cap-

tured and ordered to be shot. Four shots were fired into him when he was forced into a coffin, but the poor fellow in his dying throes burst out and Louis Riel's gallant braves hacked off his head with an axe. Scott was buried inside Fort Garry; the grave being dug at the shot door."

[Actually, according to eye witnesses, Scott was killed by a pistol put to his head.]

"This execution was published in the *New Nation* newspaper, but since then the paper has been suppressed for though it is in the interest of the villainous rebels, the paper told facts too plainly which they well know dare not be published to the outside world in the broad face of day. No one is allowed to leave or enter the country and no mail matter allowed either way unless what is sent out by the robbers giving their account of affairs.

"All the horses and cattle have been seized for the use of the New Nation Government by order of M. le President Riel. All the hay and grain is being collected for the use of the cavalry and government horses and no one dares or thinks of disobeying the orders of their own self-elected governor. It is impossible to give a description of how affairs are going on in the Settlement. Dr. Cowan was put in irons and brutally and infamously treated, all the HBC officers being crowded into Governor McTavish's house and Dr. Cowan's house is now the residence of M. le President Riel. The cattle belonging to the company have all been killed and eaten and property of every description appropriated for the maintenance of the New Nation Government.

"I may yet be blamed for laying these facts before you. Duty and honor call me and humanity urges me to do it; these are the facts as we know them. I now leave it to you to take whatever course you may consider the best under existing circumstances."

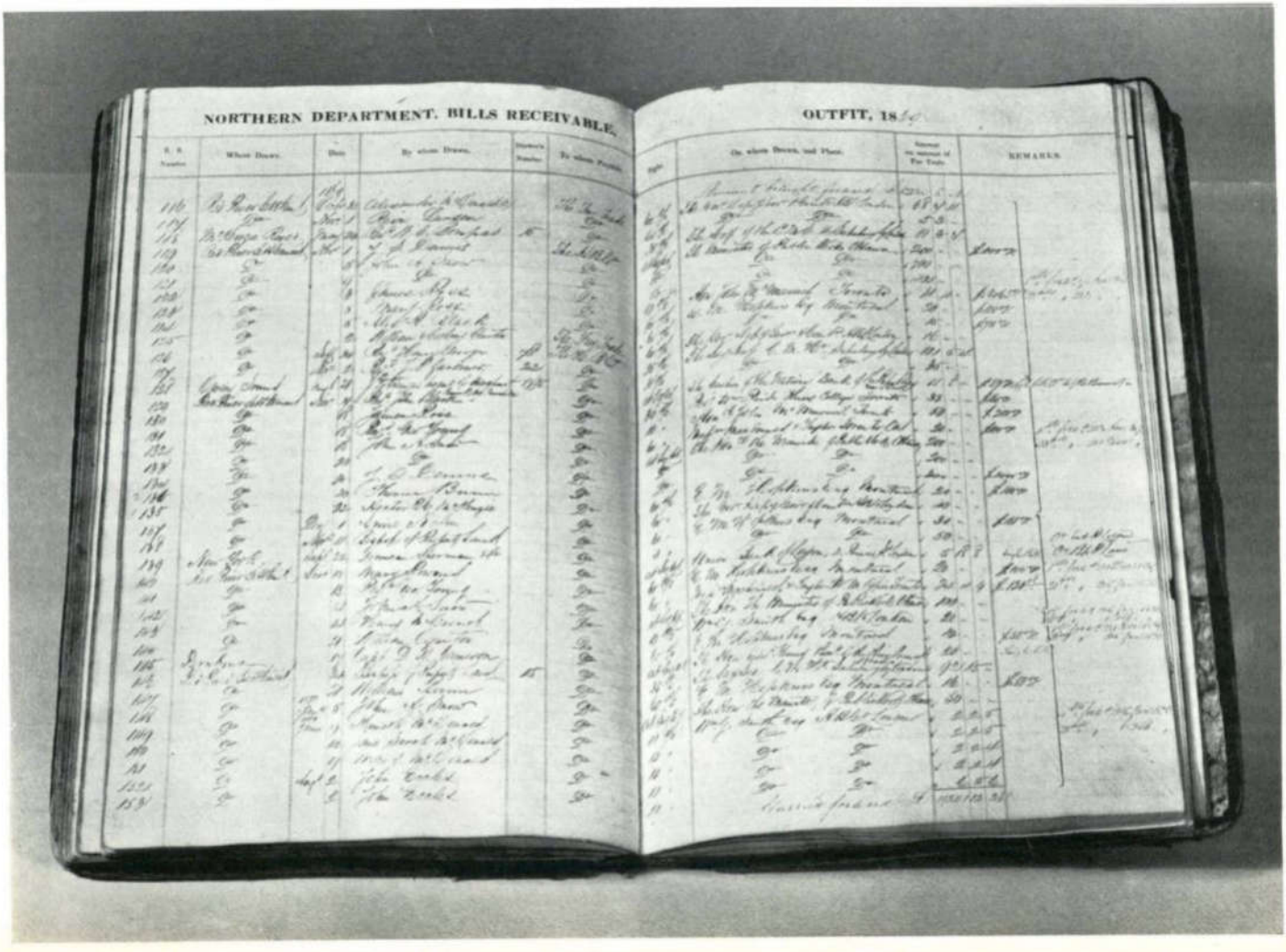
Campbell's letter ends with instructions to forward it from post to post.

Equal to Campbell's letter is one written to him by Factor Ewen MacDonald from "Manitobah" dated March 16, 1870. He writes:

"I went to Oakpoint on the 5th as I arranged with Clark to meet him there on that date. I waited there for seven days and had to run for it in the night and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner with my own and Tom's dogs. I left Oakpoint this morning (12th) and came to Swan Creek to arrange with Landison to take my mare to Manitobah. I stayed at Jack's till nearly sunset and then started back for Oakpoint intending to wait a day or two more for Clark.

"The moon was up; as I was drawing near to Rose's house I saw an unusual number of lights at Clark's house and men hurrying backwards and forwards. I at once suspected mischief was up. At Rose's I met McLeod who told me the place had been taken two hours before by 20 or more French half-breeds and that they were looking out for my coming with the intention of taking my dogs and making myself prisoner. I made up my mind not to lose two such good teams if I could help it, so round about I wheeled for Swan Creek, gave the news to Jack and arrived here early in the morning; the Frenchmen saw me coming to Rose's and as I

A page of the Bills Receivable book for Outfit 1869 kept at Fort Garry while Riel was in possession. Col. Dennis draws $3,000 on the Minister of Public Works at Ottawa. John A. Snow, superintendent of the Dawson Road, draws £1,650 in two months. Rev. W. C. (later Bishop) Bompas, bound for Fort "Youcon," draws £81 on the C. M. S. in London.



GOVERNOR MACTAVISH

TO THE

INHABITANTS OF RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

Whereas, I, WILLIAM MACTAVISH, Governor of Assiniboia, have been informed that a meeting is to be held to-day, of persons from the different Districts of the Settlement, for the ostensible purpose of taking into consideration the present political condition of the Colony, and for suggesting such measures as may appear to be best adapted for meeting the difficulties and dangers connected with the existing state of public affairs:

And Whereas I deem it advisable, at this conjuncture, to place before that meeting, as well as before the whole body of the people, what it appears to be necessary for me to declare, in the interests of public order, and of the safety and welfare of the Settlement:

THEREFORE, I NOTIFY ALL WHOM IT CONCERNS, That, during the last few weeks large bodies of armed men have taken up positions on the public high road to Pembina, and, contrary to the remonstrances and protests of the public authorities, have committed the following unlawful acts:—

FIRST. They have forcibly obstructed the movements of various persons travelling on the public highway, in the peaceable prosecution of their lawful business, and have thus violated that personal liberty which is the undoubted right of all Her Majesty's subjects.

SECONDLY. They have unlawfully seized and detained on the road at l'a Riviere Sale, in the Parish of St. Norbert, goods and merchandise of various descriptions, and of very considerable value, belonging as well to persons coming into the Colony, as to citizens already settled here, and carrying on their business in the Settlement, thereby causing great loss and inconvenience not only to the owners of those goods, but, as has formally been complained of, also to the carriers of the same, and possibly involving the whole Colony in a ruinous responsibility.

THIRDLY. They have unlawfully interfered with the public mails, both outgoing and incoming, and, by thus tampering with the established means of communication between the Settlement and the outside world, have shaken public confidence in the security of the mails, and given a shock to the trade and commerce of the Colony, of which the mischievous effects cannot now be fully estimated.

FOURTHLY. Not only without permission, but in the face of repeated remonstrances on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company's officer in immediate charge of Fort Garry, they have, in numbers varying from about sixty to one hundred and twenty, billetted themselves upon that Establishment, under the plea of protecting it from a danger which they alleged was known by themselves to be imminent, but of which they have never yet disclosed the particular nature; they have placed armed guards at the gates of an establishment which, every stick and stone of it, is private property; in spite of the most distinct protestations against such a disregard of the rights of property, they have taken possession of rooms within the Fort; and, although they have there, as yet, committed no direct act of violence to person or property, beyond what has been enumerated, yet, by their presence in such numbers with arms, for no legitimate purpose that can be assigned, they have created a state of excitement and alarm within and around the Fort, which seriously interferes with the regular business of the establishment.

FIFTHLY. A body of armed men have entered the Hudson's Bay Company's Post at Pembina, where certain Gentlemen from Canada, with their Families, were peaceably living; and, under threats of violence, have compelled them to quit the establishment at a season of the year when the rigors of winter were at hand, and forced them to retire within American Territory.

AND, in the last place, they have avowed it as their intention, in all those unlawful proceedings, to resist arrangements for the transfer of the Government of this country, which have been made under the sanction of the Imperial Parliament, and thus virtually set at defiance the Royal authority. Instead of adopting those lawful and constitutional means which, under the enlightened rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty, our Queen, are sufficient for the ultimate attainment of every object that rests upon reason and justice, the persons who have been engaged in committing those unlawful deeds, have resorted to acts which directly tend to involve themselves in consequences of the gravest nature, and to bring upon the Colony and the country at large, the evils of anarchy and the horrors of war.

Therefore, in the interests of law and order, in behalf of all the securities you have for life and property, and, in a word, for the sake of the present and the future welfare of the Settlement and its inhabitants, *I again earnestly and emphatically* PROTEST *against each and all of these unlawful acts and intents.*

I charge those engaged in them, before they are irretrievably and hopelessly involved, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably to depart to their habitations, or to their lawful business, under the pains and penalties of law; and whatever, in other respects, may be the conclusions of those who meet to deliberate upon the present critical and distracted state of public affairs, I adjure you as citizens having the interests of your country and your kindred at heart, to ratify and proclaim, with all the might of your united voices, this public notice and protest, and so avert from the country a succession of evils, of which those who see the beginning may never see the end.

You are dealing with a crisis out of which may come incalculable good or immeasurable evil: and, with all the weight of my official authority and all the influence of my individual position, let me finally charge you to adopt only such means as are lawful and constitutional, rational and safe.

Given under my hand and seal at Fort Garry, this Sixteenth day of November, 1869.

[L. S.] W. MACTAVISH,
Governor of Assiniboia.

At the meeting called by Riel for Nov. 16, this proclamation listing the rebels' offences was read by one of the Winnipeg representatives. Mactavish believed it would do no good, but prepared it in deference to the wishes of McDougall. Its chief effect was to antagonize the French and English delegates to the meeting. (Courtesy of C. M. Taylor, Esq.)

stopped there a few minutes talking to McLeod, it never struck them that I would turn from there so they did not come to take me, fancying that I would go to Clark's house. When they saw what I was up to, they made a race after me, but my dogs behaved so beautifully that they soon saw there was not a chance of catching me.

"The French are in possession at Oakpoint and McLeod came to Swan Creek and old Deschambeault (Curse Him) is staying in Paul Larondes' house getting his beef, goods, firewood, etc., etc. from the robbers. I would swear the old villain is as deep into it as any of them; he was closeted with their head man all day before and I took good notice of him during the time I was there in spite of his fine talk of running them down, etc.

"I am sending for all our men from the Outposts and we will make a stand for our lives. Perhaps, the French will meet a check here they do not expect. I think it is better to act like men than to be robbed and set adrift to freeze and starve. They are bitter against me for trying to get up opposition against them, and they would have been here before now if they did not hear that I was determined to hold out against them. The cowards seem to be more afraid of the few Scotchmen I have than half a regiment of the other kind. If I can get my outposts in before they come, they will find this place a hornet's nest to deal with. I am getting a barricade constructed in front with pine logs and building wood which will prove a formidable barrier for them to conquer.

"If you do not hear from us soon, I hope you will not forget us, we may be in a bad fix and perhaps left to perish for want of some influential person to stand by us or intercede for us. I expect our treatment will not be very good if we fall into the hands of our enemies.

"My fine new house is sure to go for it, and it pains me to the heart. It is impossible to think of keeping both places. May God be with you all."

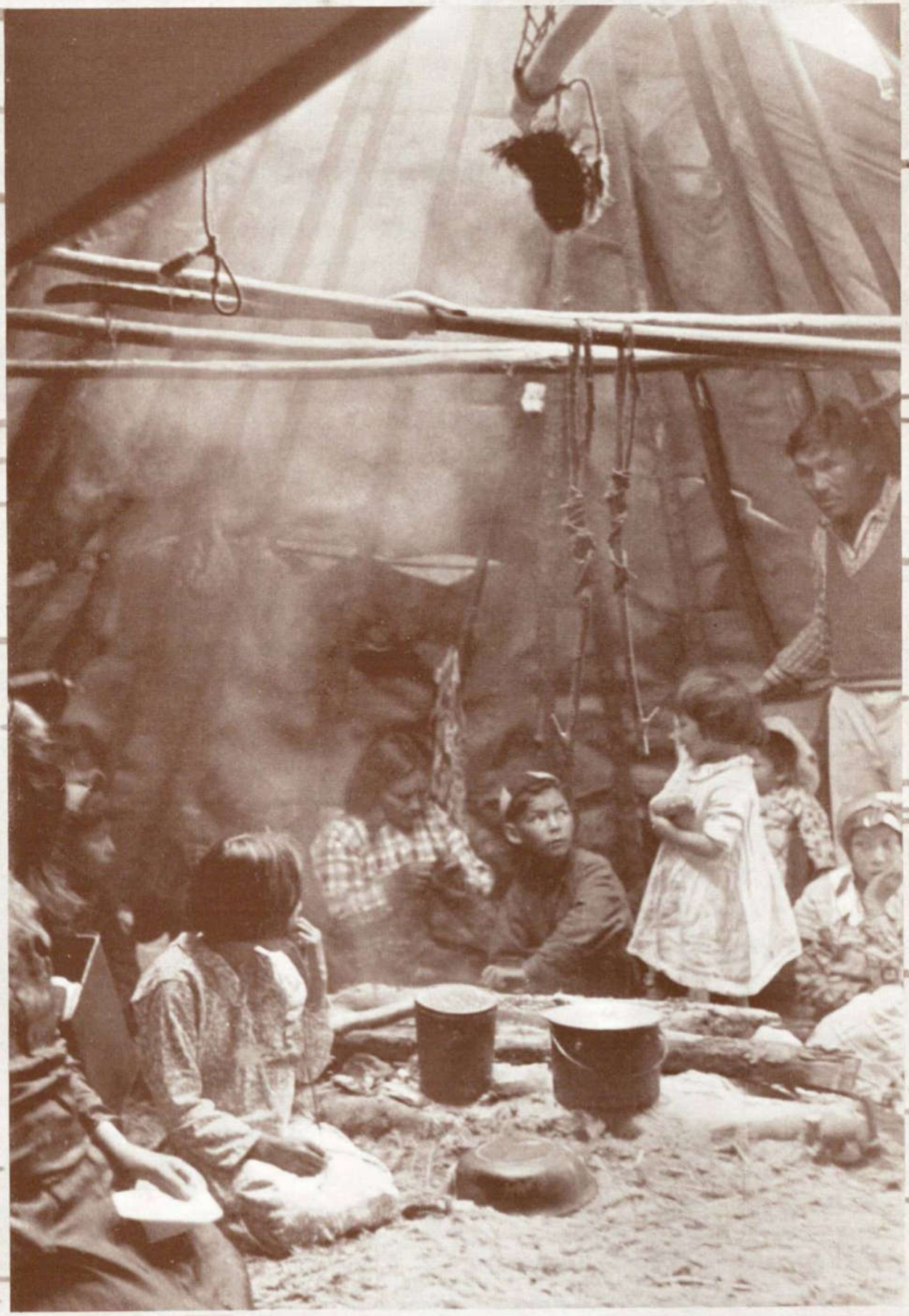
Presently, however, conditions at Fort Garry improved as we see by the latter part of Hargrave's second letter:

"23 March, 1870. Bishop Taché arrived on the 9th Instant and was immediately put under guard. He has however executed his commission apparently with some good effect. Riel now professes a desire to support the Company in its commercial operations, and the parties who were to have gone to route the Plain half-breeds have not apparently started. There appears even a possibility that the Portage Brigade will be able to start, and that the furs seized here will be returned. The prisoners have all been set at large.

"Messrs. Smith and Hardisty left for Canada on 19 Inst. Mr. DeSalaberry left for Canada a day or two later. Judge Black has consented to act as a delegate and starts today. He takes his sister with him and will probably not return. The two other delegates have not yet started.

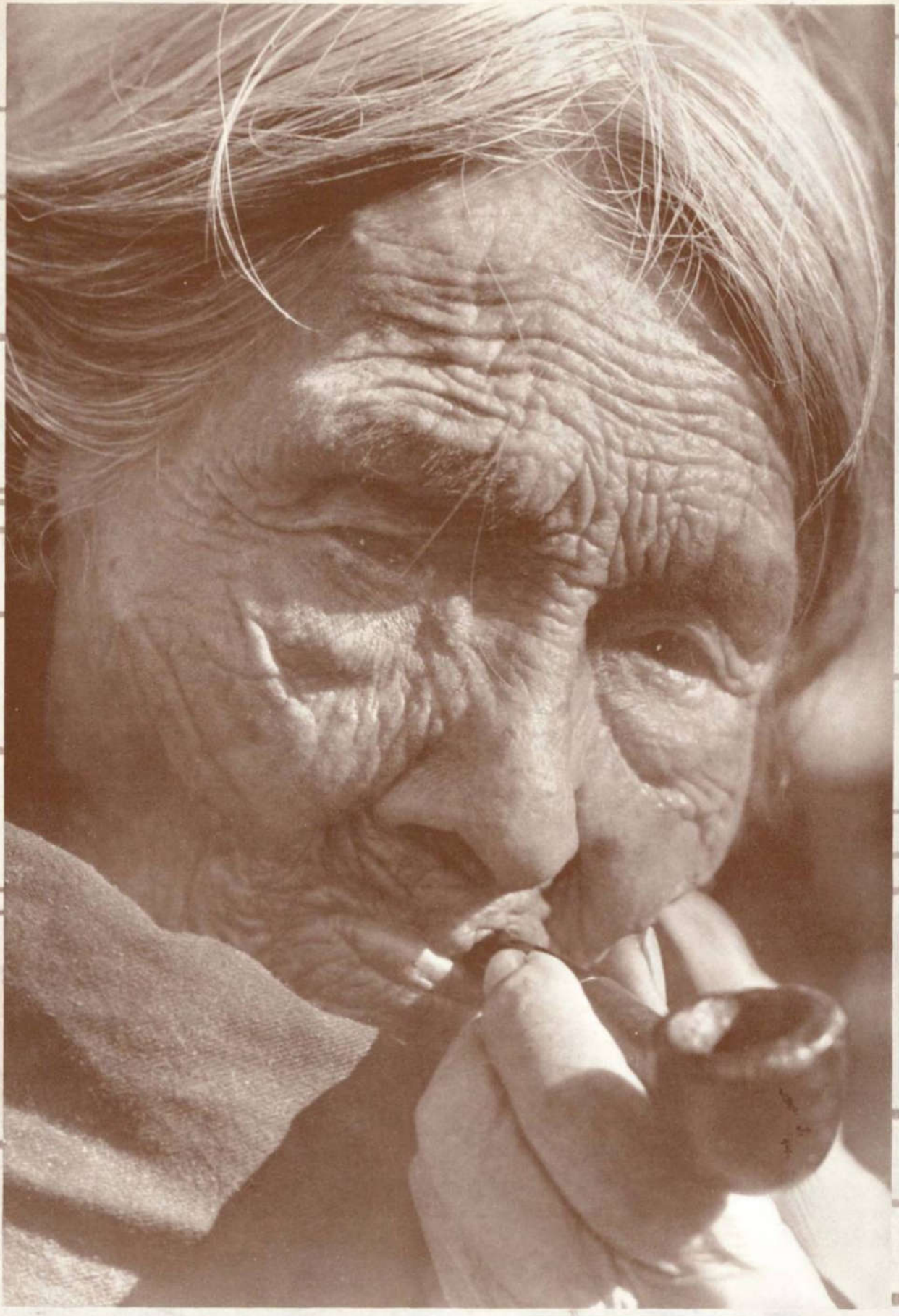
"I think you need not now fear any armed interference at Portage La Loche."

That spring Lord Wolseley came up from Eastern Canada with troops to quell the rebellion, and just before they arrived at the Upper Fort, Riel and his henchmen left in a hurry. Riel himself fled to the States, whence he returned fifteen years later to lead the Rebellion of 1885.



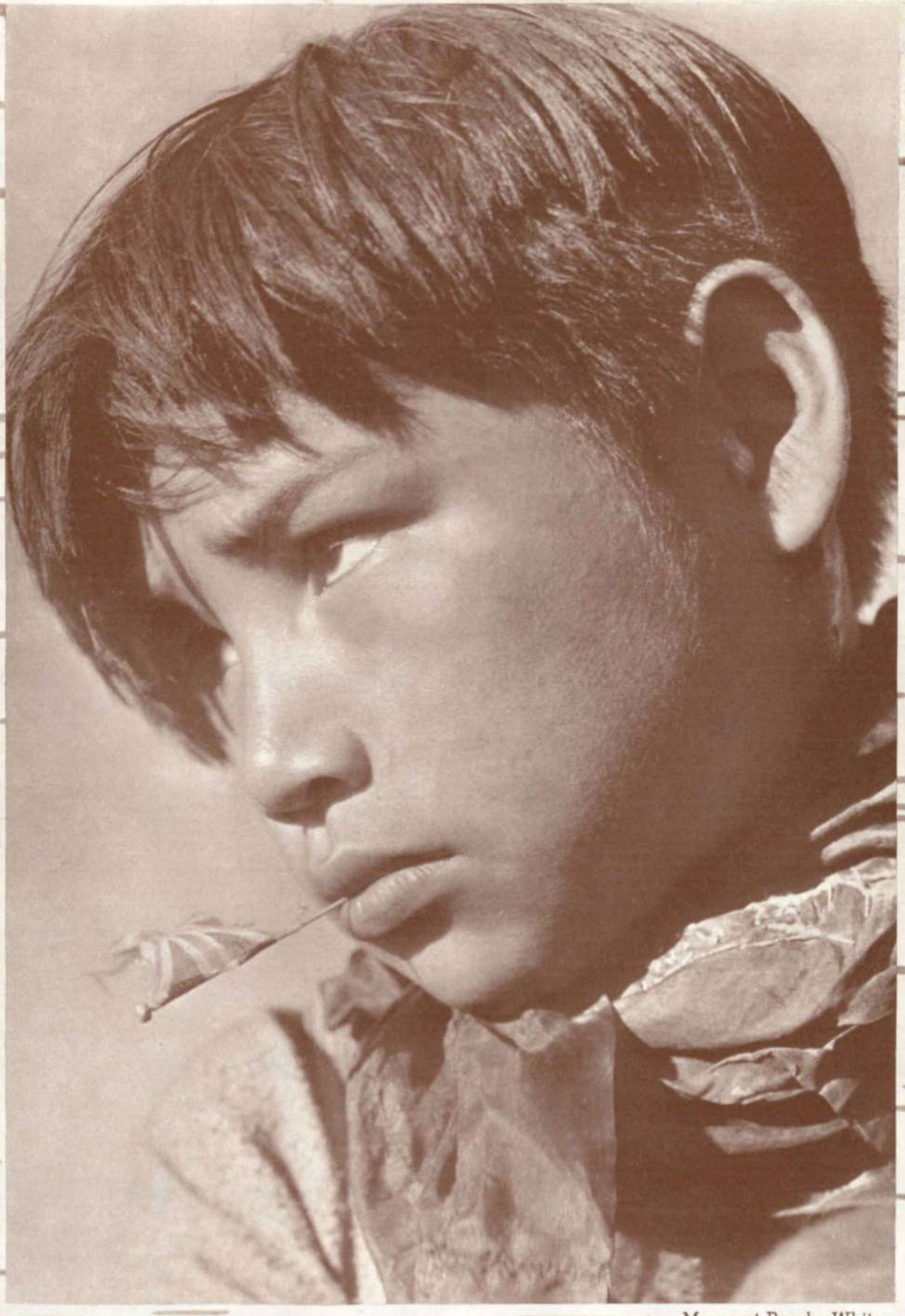
Inside the Wigwam

Martin Bovey



Cree centenarian, Montreal Lake

Terry Rowe



Slavey boy, Fort Simpson

Margaret Bourke-White
Courtesy LIFE

Feeding time at Ogoki

Martin Bovey

The Hudson's Bay Box

by

HELEN DICKSON

AWAY back in the '80s and '90s I lived on an Indian reserve on the prairie miles from a trading post, thirty miles from Moosomin, Saskatchewan. It was a lonely life for children, far from schools and young companions, and for that reason every pleasant occasion was doubly precious and left an indelible mark on my memory.

There were two events that came before Christmas, and to a certain extent led up to it. The first was the arrival of a barrel of apples from the east. Evaporated apples, it is true, were issued to the agency staff as a ration. They made fair apple-sauce, passable pies and puddings; a section of dried apple could be chewed if one were hard pressed for something to chew. But they were not apples. Oh, the good smell of those barrels of Ontario apples, red, and misted over from the cold of the journey! Once we found a leaf in the barrel, proof positive that apples grew on trees. So must Noah have felt when he saw the leaf in the dove's beak.

The greater event was the arrival of the Box from the Hudson's Bay Company in Winnipeg. It was a large packing case, and was set down in the middle of the kitchen floor. The family gathered round while my father attacked the cleated boards with hammer and chisel. The nails drew out with a protesting whine at having the secrets of the box wrenched from them. Mother delved deep and departed to her bedroom with sundry mysterious parcels that would remain hidden in her bottom drawer till Christmas. How do I know it was the bottom drawer? I peeped in one time and saw an exquisite doll which later appeared in my stocking. From that time I transferred my allegiance from Santa Claus to the Hudson's Bay Company.

To go back to the Box and the ceremony of unpacking. Out came yards of blanket cloth to make snowshoeing suits for the children; grey Persian lamb caps; flannel for shirts, and knitting wool; brown merino and velvet for mother's best dress; socks and underwear for father; pearl buttons, elastic and thread; brown windsor soap, and tooth powder; barley sugar in a bottle; other bottles . . . not barley sugar; marmalade, tea and coffee, figs, dates and raisins; Imperial Mixture tobacco; bars of sweetened cooking chocolate; in short, everything that heart could desire.

To children of the prairie who had never seen a shop, the toys that came from the big store in Winnipeg were sheer magic. I see fine toys in shops to-day, but few that can rival the rocking-horse, the splendid Noah's ark, the wonderful dolls and books that travelled across the plains by ox team to us. I never see clear candy animals or white sugar men and women that for artistry can stand up to those of my youth.

One fall, not long after the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Box, my small brother discovered a Tom Tiddler's ground, from which he brought me every day a curious little toy, a tiny top, a whistle, or a ring. I begged to be allowed to visit this dump heap he described and do a little prospecting myself, but he never found it convenient to guide me.

When Christmas Day came and the crackers were pulled, they proved a most disappointing lot—not a whistle nor a toy in one of them.

On my fourth Christmas my parents must have had a special order from the great store, kept an entire secret, for they had a surprise that I have enjoyed in retrospect all my life. It was a doll's house, painted and shingled, papered and carpeted, and furnished throughout with beautifully made shop furniture. Even now I gloat over the memory of a marble-topped table, a kitchen sink with a water tank and real taps, and a washstand, also with taps.

Water came to us in barrels from the sloughs. In spite of being strained through sacking, it still held good fishing for young ones sent to wash their hands, for dozens of mosquito larvae squeezed through the sacks. Imagine then the fairy-tale luxury of dolls' furniture with taps!

Fifty years have passed, but I can still recapture the delicious blending of scents, the soft feeling of new woollens, and the warm, fresh colours of the luxuries that were revealed at Christmastide at the opening of the Hudson's Bay Box.

Sashes for the Fur Trade

by Marius Barbeau
Ottawa

Madame Napoleon Lord of L'Assomption County, P.Q., weaving a true Assomption sash.

ASSOMPTION sashes as we know them to-day did not make their appearance until about the beginning of last century. The arrow sash or *ceinture flechee* of General Sir Isaac Brock is the oldest dated specimen, its owner having died while wearing it on the battlefield in 1812. But, sometime before that, French Canadians were making similar sashes which the fur traders of the northwest wore for utility as well as beauty.

The evidence points to the technique of finger weaving as having been known, in the historic period, to both the French Canadians and Indians; but the materials used—wool, dyes, beads, tinsels, horsehair—were all those of the white man. And the designs were of mixed extractions. Because of Indian imitativeness and wholesale acceptance of the French attire and personal ornaments by the natives, we might be inclined to presume that the woven sash was a European article. But it could not be French, as no evidence of its existence in France or in continental Europe has been found. It is decidedly a North American creation.

One of the oldest records of the making of belts by the Indians is found in a manuscript in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company in London. Dated 1743, it is a description, illustrated in colour, of "the Cheifest Instruments for making Belts, Garters or any other finery, or as they styl it *rumaheggan*." And there is a note with it, stating that "they all in generall have a Belt tied round their waste some being 4 foot Long, and 4 inches wide." The illustration is reproduced here, and the description is as follows:

(1) is a piece of Berch Rhyne Cutt square, and (2) is the worsted or Strings, Each of which string goes thro, a hole, as also the Vacant places, they moving the Rhyne up and down, at the same time passing a string thro Each time, Leaving a bead on Each Edge, which makes Very strong work, these are for powder horns &c: (3) is a Willow which the worsted is tied to at Each end, (4) is a board of 1 inch Substance which tapers to a point to stick in the Ground of abt. 4 foot Long, and split in the middle ½ way, wherein they put a piece of Deerskin (5) that is Cutt into Strips for to string beads on &c: (6) is a belt which is 6 strings of Leather, cutt small and fastn'd to a Willow (7) at Each End, taking a string of beads, or string the beads, one by one, of Different sorts, by which turning the string* over and undr. on Each Edge, Keeps all fast, these Belts are of Differt. shapes and make, (8) is Needles made of bone they use in Netting of snow shoes, (9) is a Garter of a peice of Rhyne slid in the midle taking a peice of Leather of the same width, and tyes under the Rhyne, workg. itt with goose quils or porqupine Quils, (10) is a Willow yt. itts fastn'd too.

*The string Deer's sinnews for Belts.

This, it will be seen, is a description of weaving, not finger braiding. The piece of birch bark (rind) cut square was obviously a primitive heddle, such as was used by the settlers of the 17th and 18th centuries.

But though the use of sashes and garters was partly native, it undoubtedly developed under the influence of the fur trade. The traders, in their own personal adornment, always had to keep a step ahead of their native clientèle, if for nothing else than prestige. They had to display finer and more brilliant belts and garters, on top of great coats and flashy red leggings.

It seems that the French Canadians at first borrowed from their Indian neighbours the simple process of finger braiding, which the natives had practised since prehistoric times, with nettle fibre, buffalo hair, and native hemp, that they at first used their new knowledge only in simple form—in the making of braided woollen garters such as are still made in parts of Quebec; and that they later, at the demand of the fur traders, transformed the craft beyond recognition and gave it a new diffusion among the Indians, who were glad to accept it in its renovated style.

On special occasions, when a notable voyageur wanted to honour an Indian chief for good service, he bestowed upon him (as our universities would diplomas) a medal, a gorget, a *capot* or a sash, and the men of the forests and the plains were highly impressed, as is shown by the following excerpt (translated from the French) from F. V. Malhiot's *Journal du Fort Kamanaitiguoya a la Riviere Montreal, 1804-1805:*

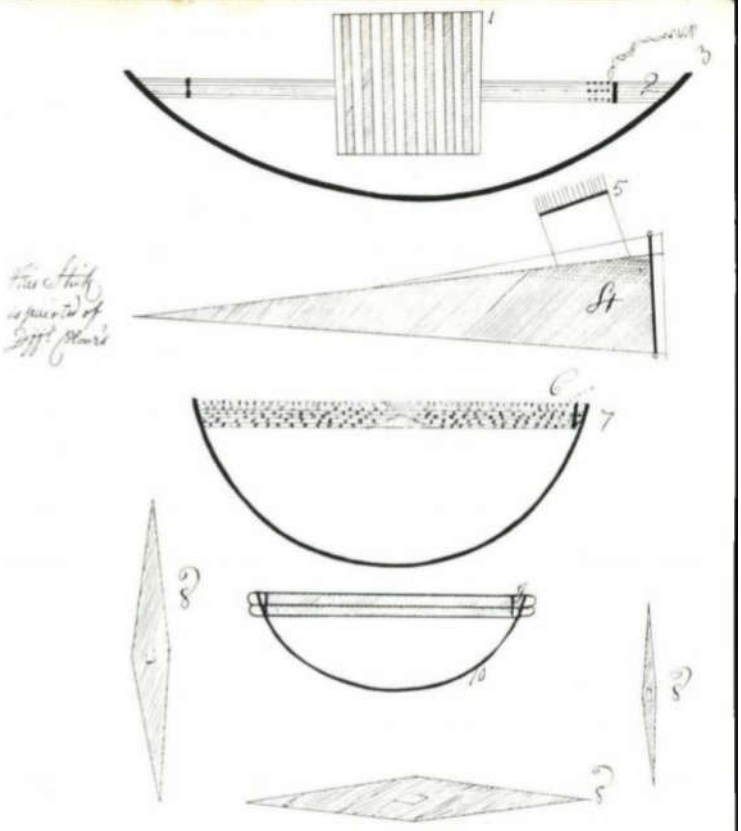
> "Bazinet arrived last night with the *butin* [goods] . . . I dressed L'Outarde [a chief] and gave him a flag, as also I did to Grande-Loutre. I gave a braided coat to Grand-Canard and another to the henchman of La Loutre. . . I harangued L'Outarde as follows: 'My Kinsman! The coat I have given you is the gift of the Great Trader [*Grand Traiteur*]. It is by this mark of distinction that he knows how to single you out from among the other chiefs of the nation. The Flag is the mark of leadership. You ought to be proud of it, as we are good judges in our preferences. Only a man like yourself can win it, a man partial to the French, and entrusted with their protection . . . Your duty as head-chief in these territories is to spare no effort, next spring, to bring here your people to trade with us. When, after the trading, the canoes are sent back full to the brim with furs to the Grand Portage, yours will be real glory!"

This eagerness of the Indians for benefit and distinction was characterized by Charles MacKenzie in a paragraph of his memoirs:

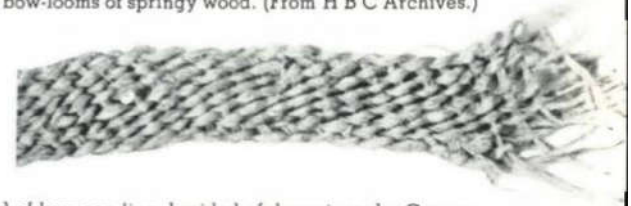
"Men of dignity," he wrote in 1806, "must deck themselves better than the common voyageur if they wish to be considered as they should be. The Indians having no idea of mental abilities, there must be something in the outward appearance to attract notice and command respect . . ."

The stage then was set for the initiation and rapid growth of the trade sashes, which were to hold a unique place in the barter for furs all over North America. These sashes and the great coats were to be, in the first part of the nineteenth century, the badge of the *bourgeois* of the North-West Company. The use of the sash was not very long confined to the traders; even the military and the Montreal civilians, like General Brock and Dr. Chenier, succumbed to the lure of this mark of distinction. The braided woollen sash of General Brock, one of the most interesting specimens of the early sashes, and the beaded arrow sash of Dr. Chenier, the 1837 rebel of St. Eustache, are now preserved at the Public Archives of Canada.

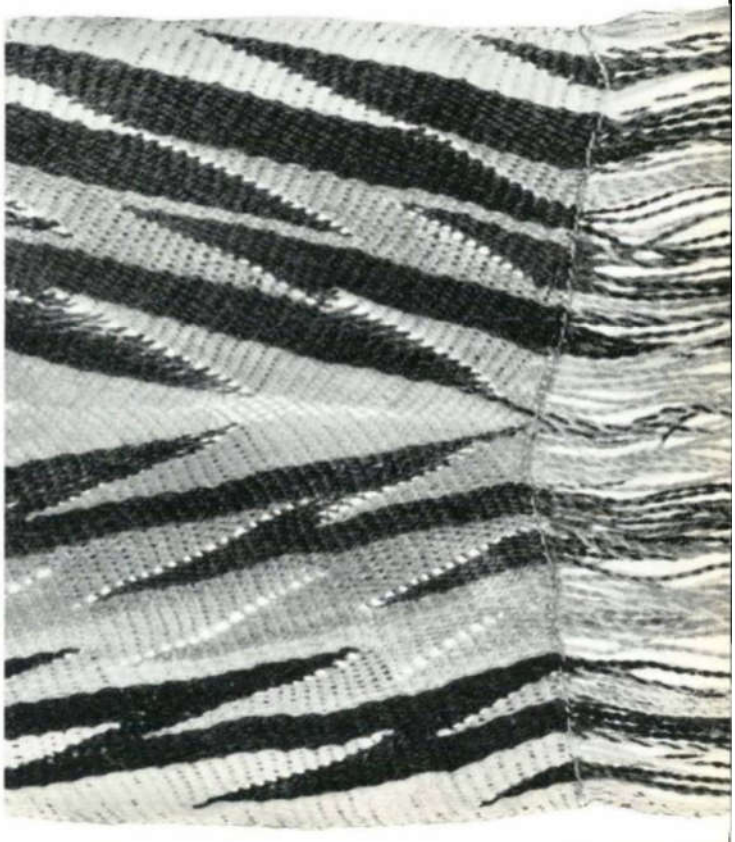
Looking back on early sashes such as we know them, we find that the early specimens are quite different from the standardized Assomption sashes of the fur trade. The "Acadian Sash," at the National Museum, consists of four separate bands or garters, the border strands of which are either sewn together or, in places, interlocked. A "Beaded Sash" found near Quebec is even more definitely of the garter type. Although Brock's sash shares in most of the characteristics of the later Assomption sashes, its pattern differs from them to a certain extent. Its texture is rather loose and elastic. For this reason it stands like a link between the earlier sashes made of separate garters sewn together and the later developments of the technique of finger weaving which the Assomption sashes involve.

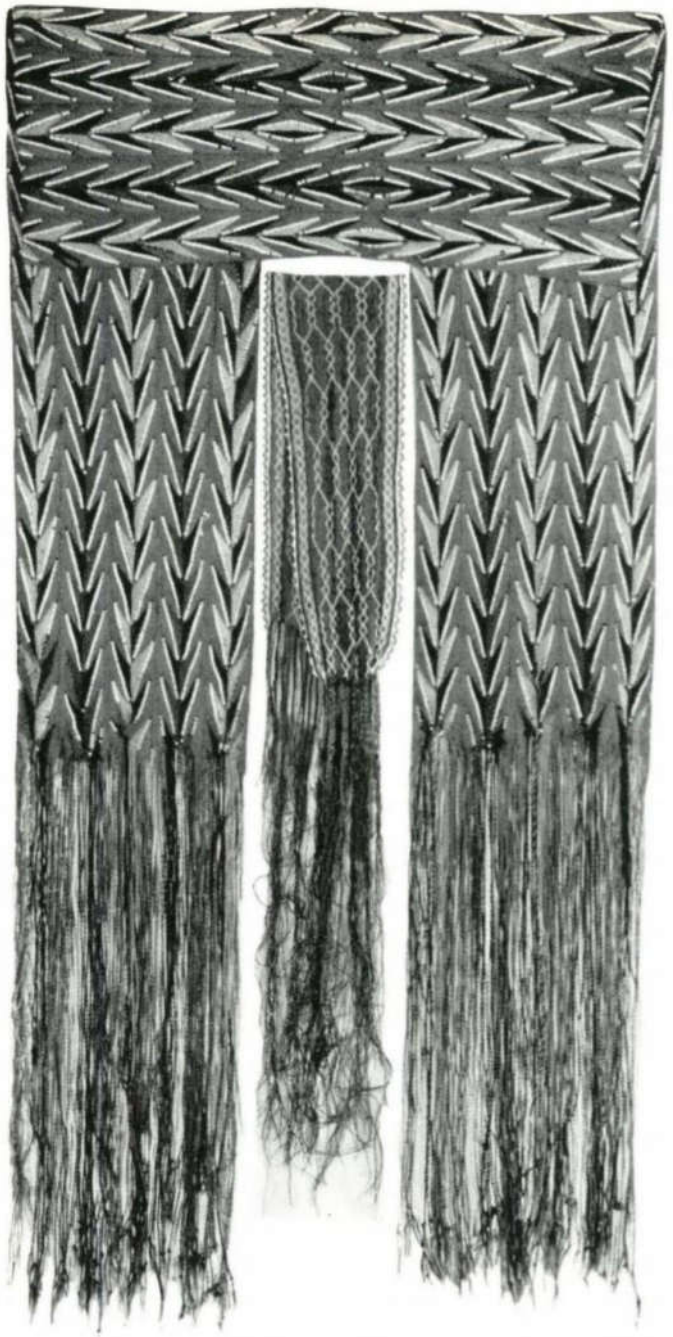


Sketch of instruments used by Indians in 1743 for weaving belts and garters. Explanation is on opposite page. The semi-circles are bow-looms of springy wood. (From H B C Archives.)



Above: End of harpoon line, braided of deer sinew by Coronation Gulf Eskimos. The braiding is similar to that of French-Canadian garters. Below: Detail of General Brock's 100-in. sash, pulled out to show the weave. The centre, usually red, is yellow. The colours are green, pale blue, yellow, deep blue, white, red, red-brown.





Dr. Chenier's "ceinture flechee" (arrow sash) in the Public Archives.
Inset: Indian braided and beaded sash in the National Museum.

The later Assomption sashes of the fur trade, although not excluding variety, are so uniformly of the same type that they differ only in size, date, and quality. Obviously they must have been made according to the standard style adopted, after 1830, by the Hudson's Bay Company acting through its Montreal or Lachine agents.

In the early stages of the activities of the North-West Company, about 1800, sashes of different descriptions and names appear on the invoice books of this company; like, worsted sashes or belts, fine worsted belts, *ceintures a flammes* (flame-like), *ceintures a fleches* (arrow sashes), fine ceintures, common worsted belts, common belts, N. W. worsted belts, etc. Eventually the name "ceinture fléchée" (arrow sash) came to prevail to the exclusion of other names, although actually the real arrow sash has almost disappeared and *ceinture a flammes* would more fitly designate the type later standardized at L'Assomption, and also known under the name of Assomption sash.

The pattern in the *ceintures*, with very few exceptions in the trade variety, consisted of a wide red band or core in the centre that ran from one end to the other; this band was barbed along the edges, like a series of continuous arrow points.

Although some of the sashes of the finger-braided type not long ago were made by the Indians, or are still being made by the Ojibwas of the Great Lakes, most of the braided sashes actually came from L'Assomption and neighborhood, thirty miles northeast of Montreal, as we find recorded in the invoices of the North-West Company for the years between 1799 and 1822. For instance, 98 Assomption sashes are listed in the "Outfit 1799," 182 in 1804, 110 in 1820, and more than 200 in 1821.

In the "Invoice of Sundries sent from Montreal . . . by the Lakes" for 1800-1821, we notice such items as white beads for sashes . . . worsted assorted, crimson and scarlet worsted, col(oure)d worsted; all this showing that, at that date, some northeastern tribes used imported worsted yarn and beads, presumably for making braided sashes.

The largest and finest specimens of Assomption sashes are over fifteen feet long including the fringes. They are ten inches wide—one is known to have been twelve; they weigh from two to three pounds, and contain thirty-two arrows or parallelograms of varied colours in their width. A number of them are about nine inches wide. The average trade sash made at L'Achigan near L'Assomption, forty years ago, was six inches wide. A few were even narrower.

The wool used by the weavers was different from that which the habitants now produce for knitting and weaving: it was dyed with old dyes, presumably vegetable and wood dyes, and indigo. Before being woven into sashes, it was spun over and twisted hard in double strands: that is, two, sometimes three, strands were spun into one.

The sashes collected among the Indians, in the past fifty years, form a group distinctly apart from the trade sashes of the Hudson's Bay Company. Most of these share in the characteristics of the French-Canadian sashes and garters, and although they belong to the same fairly recent growth, they must be

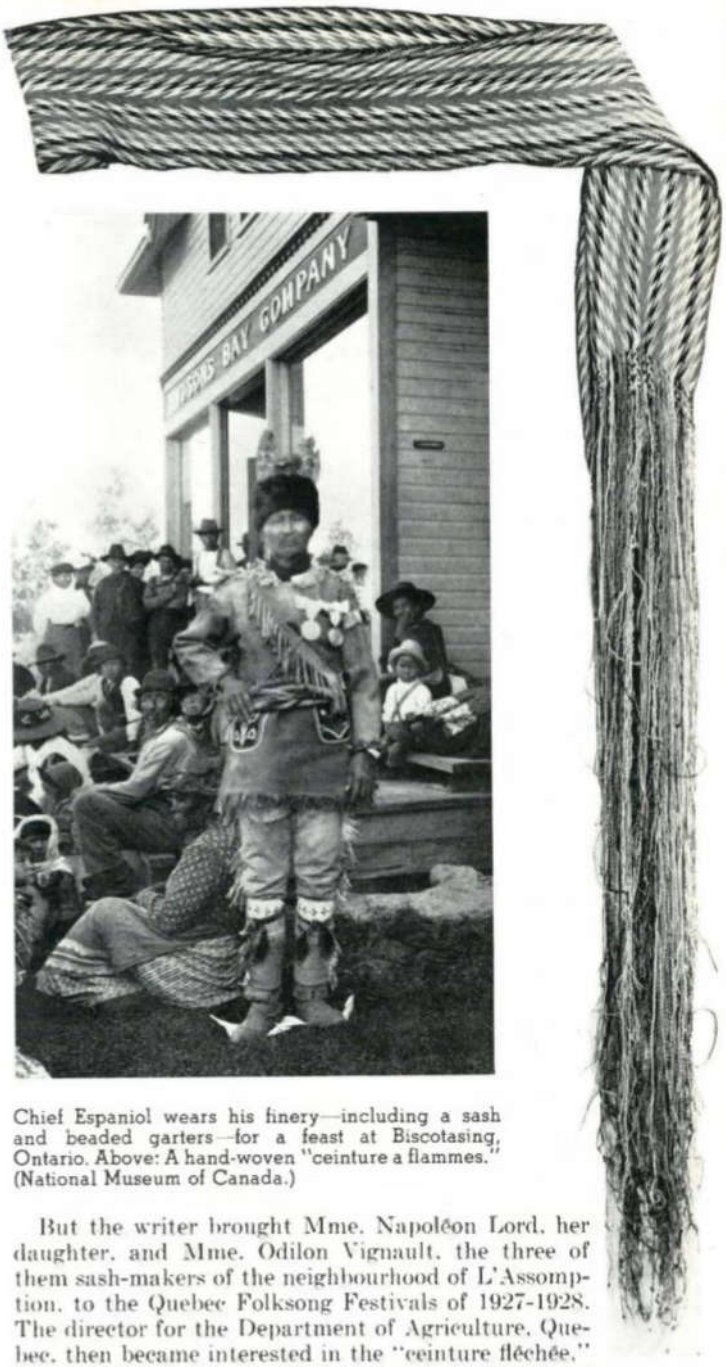
Half breed dog driver from Red River Settlement wearing an Assomption sash and garters, 1825.

considered distinct. They represent an earlier stage of development, before standardization had eliminated the many variants of style, colour and form that naturally grew out of the simpler garter forms of the beginning.

Garters and garter materials were an Indian commodity as early as the French colonial period; they appear in La Vérendrye's lists of goods about 1730-1740. The "Outfits" of the North-West Company, from 1798 on, contain abundant yearly supplies of imported garter materials. The early Canadians of the St. Lawrence valley wore garters as part of their costume. At first the materials for these articles were imported from France; they were of the loom variety. The home-made sashes and garters among them made their appearance some time before 1800. Lambert's *Travels in Canada*, illustrating the Seminary costume, in 1806, shows a braided or netted sash with a short fringe and coloured red in the centre and yellow on both sides. At about the same date, the *Annales* of the same institution speak of the Seminary sash, which was at first white, but gradually became gaudily coloured in the Indian way. The commentators further assert that this costume, including the sash, was imitated by the *coureurs de bois*.

The typical arrow sash, with its inherent finger weaving, certainly had come into existence before 1800, since at least fifteen of them are listed under the name of "ceintures à fléches" in the invoices of sundries for the North-West Company in the years 1800-1803; and a number of others appearing under the general term of *ceintures* and "worsted sashes" must have been of the same description. Most of these were given as having been purchased at L'Assomption by L. Venance. Two arrow sashes were listed, in 1798, in the inventory of the Montreal fur trader Chaboillez. And other bourgeois of the same North-West Company, at an early date, must have owned similar sashes, which soon became a badge of the fur trade.

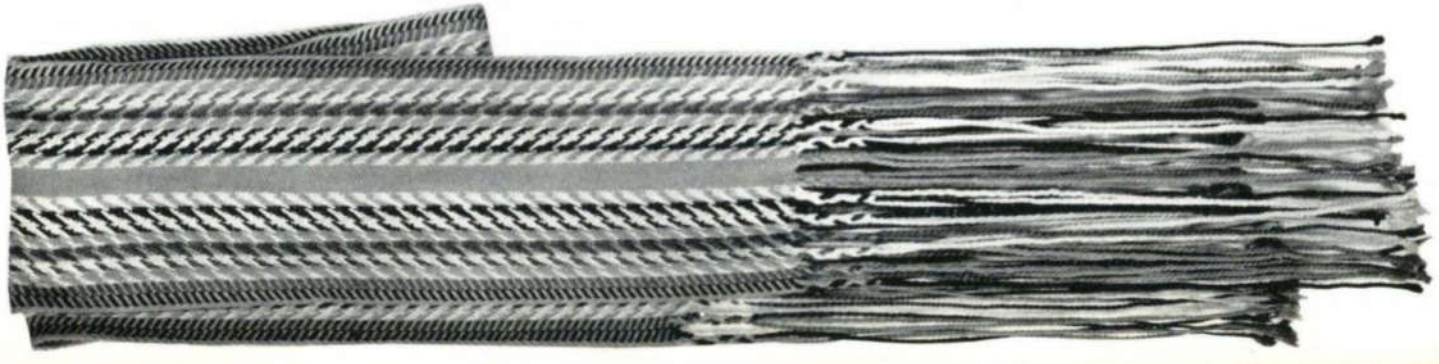
When the Assomption sashes were no longer made for the Montreal fur traders and bourgeois, and the Hudson's Bay Company had begun, over fifty years ago, to purchase imitation sashes made on looms in Great Britain, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild of Montreal drew the attention, in March, 1907, to the disappearance of the interesting Canadian handicraft which they represent. And the Guild, on that occasion, brought over from St. Jacques de L'Achigan, near L'Assomption, a veteran sash weaver—Mme. Francoise Venne. Nothing more at the time was done in recording the facts or trying to preserve the ancient and complicated technique of sash weaving. Soon afterwards it was taken for granted, with great regret, that the secret of their making already had been lost, and Assomption sash admirers—like Mr. Roy Robinson of Chicago, who has a collection of over three hundred selected specimens—wasted no time in making representative collections.



Chief Espaniol wears his finery—including a sash and beaded garters—for a feast at Biscotasing, Ontario. Above: A hand-woven "ceinture a flammes." (National Museum of Canada.)

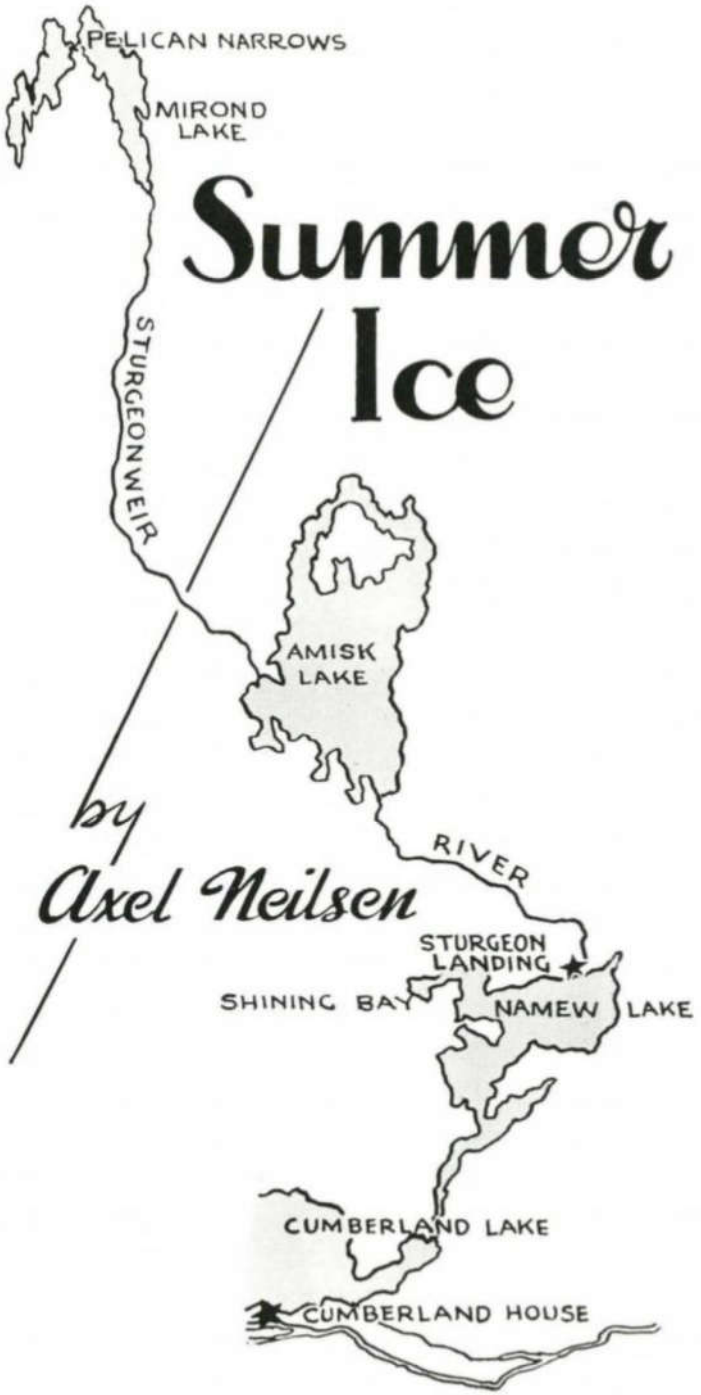
But the writer brought Mme. Napoléon Lord, her daughter, and Mme. Odilon Vignault, the three of them sash-makers of the neighbourhood of L'Assomption, to the Quebec Folksong Festivals of 1927-1928. The director for the Department of Agriculture, Quebec, then became interested in the "ceinture fléchée," and had Mme. Lord teach her craft to a few members of the staff at the Quebec school of handicrafts. Courses in sash making have been given at regular intervals since, at the Quebec school and at various points in the province, where a number of women are well acquainted with the technique and occasionally make sashes of the Assomption type. Thus the Canadian art of braiding sashes as they used to be made for the fur trading companies, will be preserved for posterity.

Machine-woven sash, as traded to-day by the Hudson's Bay Company.



Summer Ice

by Axel Neilsen



When the ice begins to break up, and you're in the middle of a large lake with a canoe full of trade goods and dogs, a thunderstorm doesn't help matters.

THEY make up a grand sweepstake for the day each spring when the Yukon River ice begins to move. In The Pas, Manitoba, there is a little side-betting on the Saskatchewan River, and I was betting on the first of May. My Indian and I had gone through all the freak antics of an April thaw, starting at Lac du Brochet and ending with the actual break-up on Reader Lake, near The Pas, where we nearly drowned.

It was an unusual spring. The weather turned cold again, and it was May 15 before the S.S. *Tobin* started chugging up the Saskatchewan River to Cumberland House. There we loaded twelve hundred pounds of freight into a canoe, besides the dogs and a jumper-sleigh. But we didn't go far by canoe. McDonald Bay and Namew Lake were full of ice. Now we had to fit the dogs with moccasins. The ice was needle-point, cut by the wind, sharp enough to wear out a pair of moccasin rubbers in one day.

Tanas, my Indian companion, was a good fellow, the kind who never kicked about weather, who took things as they came, and did more than his full share of the work. It was hard work, and tedious, getting over and around the ice. The Saskatchewan River was literally backing into the lakes, causing the ice sheet to split up into islands varying in size from a few acres to a square mile. Sometimes one cake of ice started to pile up against the next one. In some places there would be a water channel only a few yards in width separating one island of ice from the next. And then again, we often found open water for a hundred yards at a stretch. The ice ranged from the solid unyielding masses to crumbling, honeycomb and rotten slush.

Travelling during the break-up is no fun, and few people attempt it. Every time we reached water it meant unloading our goods, taking the canoe off the jumper-sleigh, launching the canoe, loading our goods and our dogs into the canoe. That was easy enough, though tedious work, where the ice was strong. It was a different story where it was rotten. Sometimes the jumper-sleigh would go through, the canoe would settle, and the water come oozing up. This meant poling through the ice, retrieving the jumper and the dogs, keeping the canoe in balance, and ourselves from dropping through. If the ice wasn't rotten enough for poling the canoe through it, Tanas and I had to get out, walk gingerly over it, pushing the canoe along, and at the same time taking care not to drop through.

Tanas fell in up to his neck, and so did I. The trick was to keep a firm grip on the gunwales, and for emergency purposes I'd strung ropes all around the canoe. I don't know what would have happened had both of us fallen through at once, because there's no footing where it's fifty feet to bottom, and pulling yourself out of summer ice, unaided, isn't so easy. The shock of cold water, the clinging mass of honeycombed ice, the long reach to the gunwales . . . it wasn't pleasant exercise.

The dogs were panic-stricken, having fallen in themselves on numerous occasions. Blackie, the wheel dog, jumped into clear water once, thinking he was going to land on glare ice. With a yelp of dismay, he started swimming for the canoe. I got him by the collar and tied him up to a thwart. Blackie had to drag in the water until ice was reached, because taking a wet dog

into the canoe would have ruined some of our trading goods. We spent four days bulling through twenty miles of breaking ice, four days of sixteen hours each, spending one whole day in the middle of Namew Lake, wondering if we would ever make the point running out of Shining Bay.

At Sturgeon Landing we rested up. The Sturgeon-weir River was open, except for clogging cakes of ice which sometimes jammed in the rapids. The river runs over slabs of limestone, only a foot deep in places, twelve miles an hour. Amisk Lake was solid, and our only trouble was getting into the water and out again through a half mile or so of rotten ice.

It was the first day of June when we arrived at the main part of Mirond Lake. It was only twelve miles home from here. We'd kept Mirond Lake in sight for two days, for that's how long it took us to make the five miles of an island-studded bay, where the ice was neither one thing nor the other, neither fit for poling through with a canoe, nor strong enough to bear us up as we pushed the canoe along on the sleigh. It took us four hours to make shore, once, and at last we began to portage our freight along the shore, mile after mile, over cliffs, through water in the hollows, sweating by the hour where normally it would have taken but a few minutes to make the same distance had it been one thing or the other: open water, or solid ice.

The main sheet of Mirond Lake ice was solid, praise be, all of four feet thick. It was honeycombed in one sense, but the ice wasn't rotten, and a man could have driven a team of horses over it. From now on it ought to be clear sailing, at least until we got to the far bay, close to Pelican Narrows, where we might have to struggle two days more in plain sight of the church spire.

We perched the canoe on the jumper-sleigh, and the dogs scrabbled off with nearly a ton weight behind them—as we had picked up more supplies at the Landing. The wind was in the south, and the birch trees were budding out, as we could see from the yellow haze painted over the hills behind us. The wind was blowing so strong that I figured we might as well sail the canoe over the ice. This worked fine, but we had to load the dogs inside the canoe, because the sailing went faster than the dogs could leg it, even with their tugs slack.

There were cracks in the ice on Mirond Lake too, most of them so narrow that we took them on the fly. We had just about reached the middle of the lake when suddenly we came to an opening that was fifty yards across!

Tanas and I jumped out of the canoe, and, in spite of all we could do, with sail hauled down and both of us using our feet for braking power, we dived off the ice and into the water. The Indian was on one side of the canoe, and I balanced the other side. Before we could climb out of the water, the whole rig, canoe sitting on a submerged sled, blew up against the opposite ice sheet. We scrambled out, cold and sodden.

Just as we finished unloading the canoe, I noticed a black cloud in the northwest. There was plenty to do for the moment without sky-gazing, for the jumper-sleigh was giving a little trouble, sticking against the ice, trying to get underneath. Finally, as we finished

"Neither man nor beast has the ghost of a chance in rotten ice. . ."

Canoe on a jumper-sleigh in the rat marshes near Cumberland House.

loading the canoe and all our goods on the sled, the wind died down, and the black cloud was making things dark on the lake.

"Storms don't come from the northwest," said Tanas, who betrayed a little anxiety in his voice. The ice was only about three feet thick here, still strong, but nothing to brag about in a storm.

"Hear that?" I said. "Thunder!" We hitched up our dogs, since the wind was no more, and just as we got under way a bolt of lightning streaked down from the sky, followed by a very summery thunder clap. There was something incongruous about all this ice beneath our feet, an electrical storm above us.

"There's wind with that storm," I said to the Indian. "Open water in Chipewyan Bay; see the waves?" Tanas opened his mouth, and his eyes bulged. The waves were six or seven miles off, and to be seen at such a distance, the storm must be a little cyclone.

"We're in danger!" he said. Both of us knew that the thickest ice was always toward the east shore, where the water was deep, and it didn't freeze up until mid-December. But never mind, the last ice is always the thickest because there is less snow to keep it warm. It was five miles to the east shore; we had no thought of making it before the storm broke.

"I feel . . . funny," said Tanas. We spoke Cree, of course; and I knew what the Indian meant. We were in the suction trough of a cyclone. The wind went howling by overhead. Rain came pelting down all around us. The dogs lost their footing, and I couldn't help laughing, because the lead dog, Coffee, had such a surprised look on his face, as if he wondered what made all fours leave the ice that way. A paddle went spiralling with the wind. And then, as suddenly as the cyclone struck, it left us and, instead of feeling the weight lifted from our bodies, we felt suddenly depressed, as if something sat heavily on our shoulders. I don't suppose all this lasted three seconds; but for hours afterwards we talked about it.

The wind blew a straight gale now, coming from the west.

"Turn with the wind!" I shouted, though the gale nearly took my words away. Tanas was making the same suggestion, for it was the only thing we could do. The rain was coming down like a walled torrent, and the ice was groaning under our feet. The dogs were all in a tangle, and we had to take time out to unsnap tugs to let them loose. We didn't want the dogs just now; Tanas and I could handle jumper-sled and canoe much better without them. The dogs crowded around us, wanting to get inside the canoe. They got underfoot, and Mutt was such a nuisance I had to pick her up and let her ride.

The water was up to our ankles, and the ice was moving. We came to a break, and here we untied the sled, loading it athwart the canoe. Gaining the ice once more just ahead of a crunching roar as one sheet ground against the other, we ran the canoe on its keel. With all this rain-water on top of the ice, anything could happen, depending on how long the storm lasted. It was hard to see three feet ahead of us; the only thing we had for a guide was our feet, as we judged the feel of the ice, always trying to keep one foot on a solid while the other searched for rotten ice or open water. Besides looking to our own safety, we had to keep the canoe on an even keel. Presently—

"Waves!" shouted Tanas. I hadn't wanted to say anything, but I'd heard waves, too. We couldn't see them, but they weren't far behind. The dogs were all aboard the canoe, whimpering away. Coffee barked and barked, he was so scared. Mutt wanted to keep close to me, and I didn't appreciate it when she slobbered her long tongue into my face. There she was, perched in the canoe, while the Indian and I kept the whole show going, trying to save our own skins no doubt, but doing something for the dogs as well. Neither man nor beast has the ghost of a chance in rotten ice; it's the quickest drowning there is.

Dogs hauling canoes on loaded toboggans show an interest in their strange competitor.

Blackie jumped out of the canoe at a critical moment. He was on the Indian's side, and how Tanas kept balance with one hand, and himself from breaking through the ice, the while he tossed Blackie back into the canoe . . . well, the man seems to meet the moment, times like this.

The grinding of breaking ice was getting closer; we felt the undulations as the mammoth waves reached under the ice, setting it into motion, breaking it. All around us we saw spouts of water, as the pressure of waves broke through. I looked back; and now there was something to see—white caps to the far horizon and, closer still, great green upheavals of water and broken ice, coming nearer and nearer. Mutt decided she wasn't going to ride any longer, and with that she jumped out. My feet were breaking through the ice at every other step, but I didn't want to lose that dog. She had four feet to hold her up, and a lot less weight. I took a paddle along to help distribute my weight. Crawling on all fours, and kneeling on the paddle, I got Mutt by the scruff of the neck. As I heaved her into the canoe, I gave her a box which didn't hurt Mutt so much as it hurt her feelings. At any rate, she knew that I meant business, and that was the important thing just then.

After a while we came to a part of the lake where there was more water than ice, and we climbed into the canoe. Ordinarily we could ride the waves, Tanas and I, anywhere and any size. A canoe lifts lightly on the waves, let the crest blow ever so white. If you know your stuff, it's an easy matter keeping afloat in the biggest blow. But riding a mountain of ice is a different story. There was open water a hundred yards behind us, and we were in the canoe, paddling one length ahead of our grave. Mountains of ice rose up from below, and the crests bent over, crashing aboard. The canoe was half full of water and ice. The dogs, including Mutt herself, were all very silent. They were rigid, every one, knowing as well as we that life or death hung by a thread.

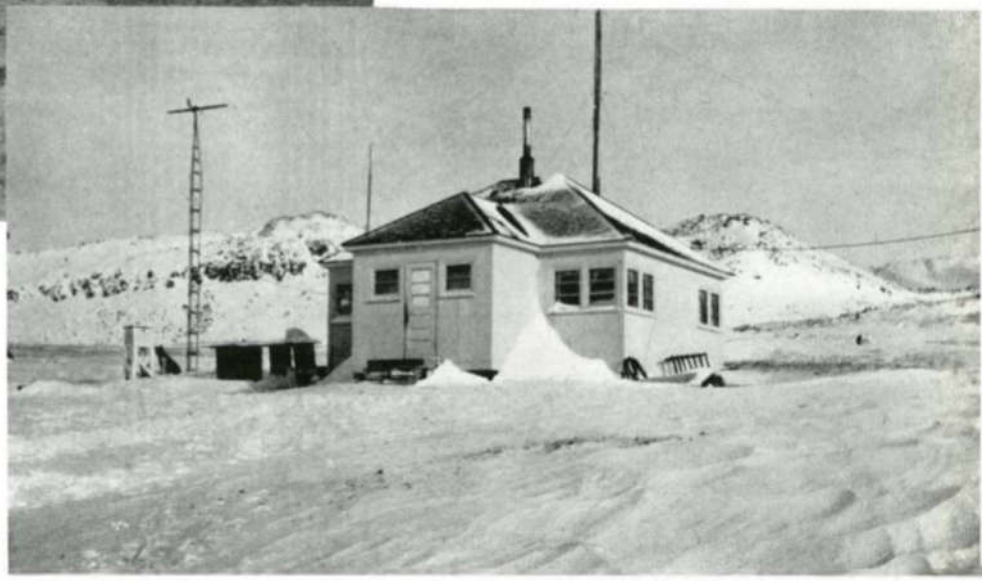
My arms ached. I was afraid the paddle would break, and when the canoe refused to lift it made me mad. The ice stove in three ribs in one place and, except for the freight, I'm sure the canoe would have collapsed like an egg-shell. The freight was pretty solid stuff, a life-saver in the present situation. And in the end we licked the storm. We landed on solid ice, about a mile from the east shore of Mirond Lake. The thunder rolled off in the distance. The sun came out, and we looked over a white-capped lake, now more than two-thirds clear of ice, all in the space of an hour.

The wind began to drop. The water grew calm, and soon we were paddling down the lake, just as if nothing had happened. We were still wet. The wind had died, until at last a dead calm settled over everything. The water was glassy, the sun was hot. We paddled in our shirt sleeves, and I'm sure Tanas was thinking much the same thoughts as my own:

"By the length of a canoe, the squeeze of one good play, we're looking at the sun; and the whole village won't be dragging for us, a hundred feet beneath the waves." The dogs were fast asleep, enjoying the ride and the quiet. All but Mutt, and she kept a reproachful eye on me, perhaps still wondering why I should box her ear for leaving a sinking ship.

Booming along on a komatik, with a tent up for sail.

Building the new dwelling at Holman Island, north of latitude 70°. Plasterboard paper is being laid over the first coat of plywood, before the second coat is applied. Though the stormy winds do blow—at 50° below zero—the finished house stays snug and warm.



PLYWOOD *Goes North*

by John Watson
Winnipeg

WHEN efficiency walks in the door, romance flies out the window. But romance, as many a fur trader knows, makes a pretty cold room-mate north of sixty-six thirty-three. It's all very well to live in an old log house with the shade of Sir George Simpson, Dr. Rae, or some legendary Scots factor to keep you company o'nights. But it's a lot more comfortable to live in a ghostless house, where neither draught nor frost can break through and congeal.

That's why we've started a revolution in the North—a revolution in that second most important of human needs, housing.

Ever since the Canadian fur trade started, men have housed themselves in buildings hewn from the forest. Timbers in the old days were adzed or broad-axed from tree trunks, planks were pit-sawn, shingles were hand-split. But it didn't take the Company men long to discover that native materials left something to be desired. As early as 1685—perhaps earlier—ships sailing for Hudson Bay carried bricks, tile, glass, and lumber for the building of fur trade posts.

Building materials, however, are heavy and costly to ship, and the further inland the Company penetrated, the more expensive transportation of them became. In time, the typical Hudson's Bay post building developed into a structure built of short, squared logs, not dovetailed at the corners, but mortised into upright posts both at the corners and at intervals along the walls. Spaces between the logs were chinked with moss; but when a gale was raging outside at forty below, the occupant got the impression of living in a house made of fly-netting. In the summer, when ventilation would have been welcomed, the logs swelled with moisture and tightened up. In the winter, they dried out, shrank, and left gaps between roof and wall that a man could shove his hand through. Incidentally, the conventional log cabin of round timbers seems to have been almost unknown in the Company service except in British Columbia.

In the far North, where no trees grow—or none above scrub size—the post buildings had to be constructed of imported lumber. Logs were of course unknown, so frame houses were used, and they were a distinct improvement, from the standpoint of warmth, over the log buildings. But the cost of transporting a whole building in dimension lumber, windows, doors, shingles, nails, paint, etc., comes extremely high when each house weighs between twenty-five and fifty tons, and must be taken north several hundred miles. Add to this the cost of transporting skilled carpenters there and back by ship or plane, and the resultant price of a single Arctic dwelling becomes somewhat staggering.

Yet, as with so many other types of property, it isn't only the initial cost that must be taken into consideration: it's also the upkeep. Fires must be kept burning all winter, and with no wood to be had and coal at $230 a ton, as it is at Fort Ross, heating the house amounts to a tidy little item.

What is needed, then, is a house that is light in construction but which will keep out the cold. And it was to find this paragon among frontier dwellings that the Fur Trade Department of the Company, in 1939, began experimenting—and is still experimenting—with new types of buildings.

For light building material, plywood was the obvious answer. And for insulation, wood and rock wool seemed to be the best for our particular needs. To date, about ten dwellings have been erected, at places so widely separated as Stewart River, Holman Island, and Berens River; and the fur traders who occupy them have given these modern, streamlined houses the stamp of their approval.

Perhaps the greatest difference between the old and the new is due to the insulation. In ordinary frame houses, during the Arctic winters, the fires must be kept going continuously all night; otherwise the temperature in the house drops about fifty degrees Fahrenheit. In the new, insulated dwellings, the drop has been reduced to about ten degrees, with no fires burning. The difference that this makes in the consumption of fuel can well be imagined.

Windows in the older buildings used to be made small, because the larger they were the harder it was to heat the house. But large windows have now been made possible by factory production of double-glazed units. These permit higher relative humidities inside the house, without producing annoying condensation on the panes. We also find that in most places the double-glazed sash does away with the necessity for storm windows.

Naturally there are great differences in weather conditions within the twenty-five degrees of latitude covered by our fur trade posts. The usual intricate problems of orientation become even more so when such factors must be taken into account as prevailing winds, drifting snow, and elevations of the sun at different seasons.

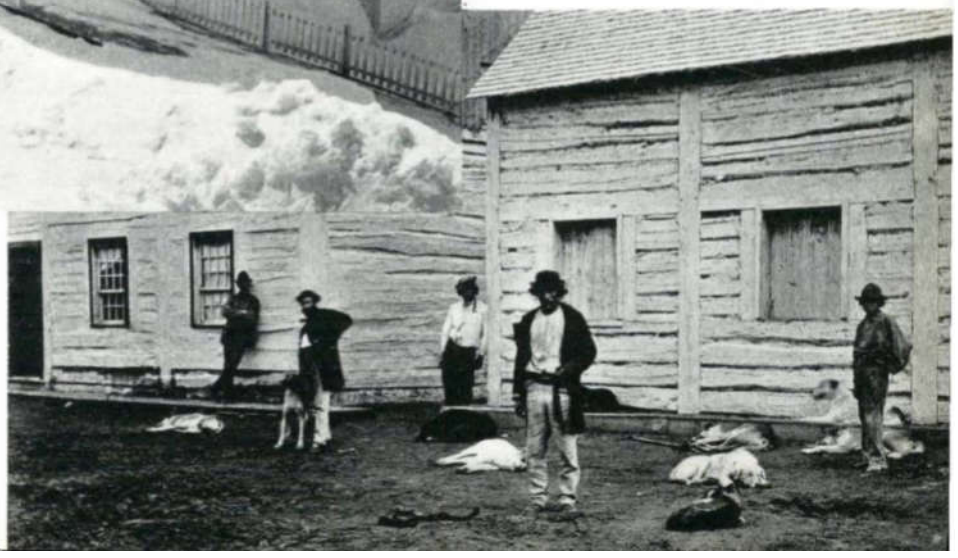
So much for our experiments in northern buildings to date. The most interesting part of the study is perhaps the future. New methods and new designs are continually being worked out, and the following are the lines along which we are proceeding. They have been tried out in the centres of population and found satisfactory. Now we hope to adapt them to the frontier.

Since it is commonly conceded that present day methods of wood frame construction are very wasteful of material and labour, we are turning to prefabricated dwellings based largely on the "stressed skin" principle. Extremely light weight floor, wall, ceiling and roof sections will be made in the factory by skilled workmen using modern machines, and then shipped to the building site, where they will be erected in a matter of days instead of months. Sections are complete with insulation, windows and doors already fitted and hung, and in some cases all coats of paint but the final one are sprayed on.

Since the skin or outer coverings assume a large part of the load, the sections can be built with much smaller and lighter framing members. The new waterproof plywood lends itself very well to this type of construction because of its great strength in tension and compression when glued to dry framing members. All the component parts, in fact, contribute to the strength of the whole structure, none being applied for the sake of decoration or because of pure and simple habit. Such unnecessary details as corner boards, window casings, and heavy frieze boards are eliminated. Thereby much of the carpenters' time is saved, and there is no waste by cutting.

In the matter of transportation cost, this type of building scores again. A finished house will weigh about twenty-five pounds per square foot of floor area compared with about sixty pounds for a typical frame

Veterans of the fur trade. The manager's residence and staff house at Moose Factory, built of squared logs in 1820, and covered with clapboard for warmth.



Taken at Carlton House, Saskatchewan, in the 1870's, this photo shows how the logs dropped and left great gaps in the walls.

Building the frame dwelling at Arctic Bay, 73° north, where the lumber comes pretty high in cost as well as latitude. It was here that Evelyn Scott, the famous Arctic Bay baby, was born.

dwelling. The tremendous saving in freight and labour in the field will more than offset the added factory costs and the higher price of the better materials.

One peculiar factor that has to be taken into account in the matter of fur trade buildings is change of site. The location of posts is often changed, and moving a frame or log building is no easy matter when you have nothing but man and dog power. In the case of the new buildings, however, the smaller types of dwellings, stores and warehouses can be easily knocked down for re-erection elsewhere. Managers in such locations will therefore not suffer with poor buildings because their particular locations are considered merely temporary. Plywood construction also permits enlargements to be made without serious structural changes.

We are not yet sure how these buildings will be heated, but we are working on "panel" heating—that is, heating the walls and floors. Under this system, warm air is circulated through floors and inside partitions, and thus the possibilities of unbalanced heating during high winds are minimized. The use of plywood on exterior walls also completely stops air infiltration, which is a great help in maintaining a balanced warm air heating system.

Coal at $230 a ton being stacked at Fort Ross.

Panel heating is based on the fact that warm objects radiate heat to cold ones. With the walls and floors at 85° and the air in the room at 60-65°, the occupant will be very comfortable, because his body will not lose heat, first to the floor which is nearest to him, and second to the walls which surround him. In addition, the light structure does not absorb a very large part of the heating plant's output, practically all this being used to heat the air inside the building.

Improvements in lighting are being developed too. Why continue to use gas and oil lamps when there is wind to be harnessed, and when gasoline-driven electric plants are so efficient? Generally, wind is plentiful around the great inland seas of Canada's northland—Athabaska, Slave, and Great Bear Lakes, and Hudson Bay. Posts in these areas are therefore first considered for wind charger lighting units but most of the others are best served by gasoline plants.

With electric light, the subject of interior decorating is closely allied, so that the best possible result can be secured from a relatively low light production. The psychological effect of colours bears consideration also, especially in more northerly buildings where long periods of summer daylight contrast strongly with the very short winter days. What colours are cheerful, which ones are monotonous, what are the relative reflection efficiencies—all these questions must be given careful thought before deciding on an interior colour scheme.

As yet we have only begun to explore the possibilities of this new type of building. Such a drastic change must naturally progress slowly at first. But the reconstruction has started and it is bound to gain momentum as the new houses win favour among the fur traders.

New Plywood Dwellings

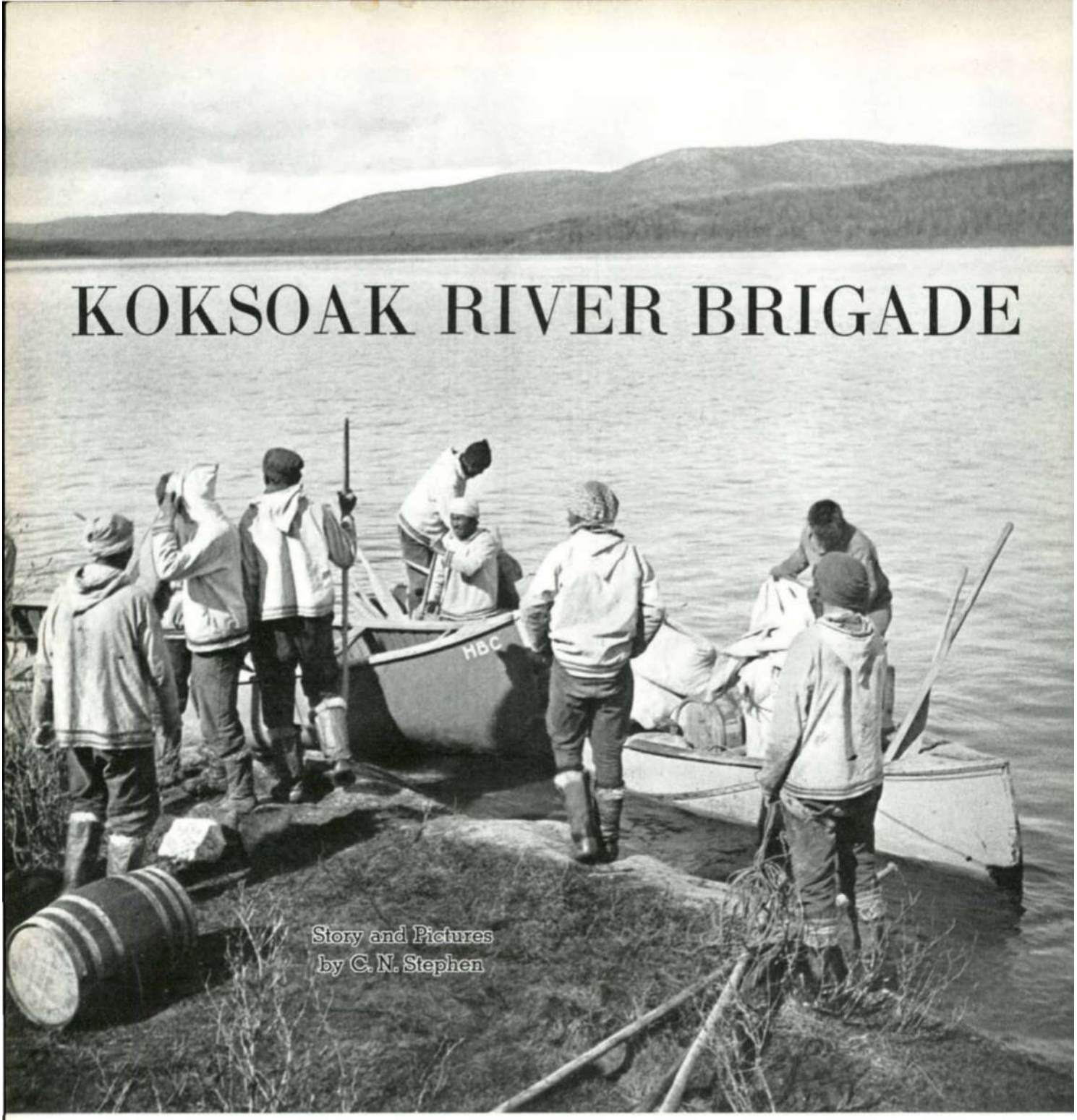
Photos by John Watson

Putting plywood on the house at Fort Resolution, Great Slave Lake. Note the lack of moulding round the door and window, and the width of the plywood sheets.

Old and new types of construction at Nelson Forks, B.C. On the left is the flour cache, built of rounded logs; on the right, the post manager's modern residence.

Mr. and Mrs. Paddy Houston at Stewart River, Yukon Territory, are evidently pleased with their streamlined dwelling.

KOKSOAK RIVER BRIGADE

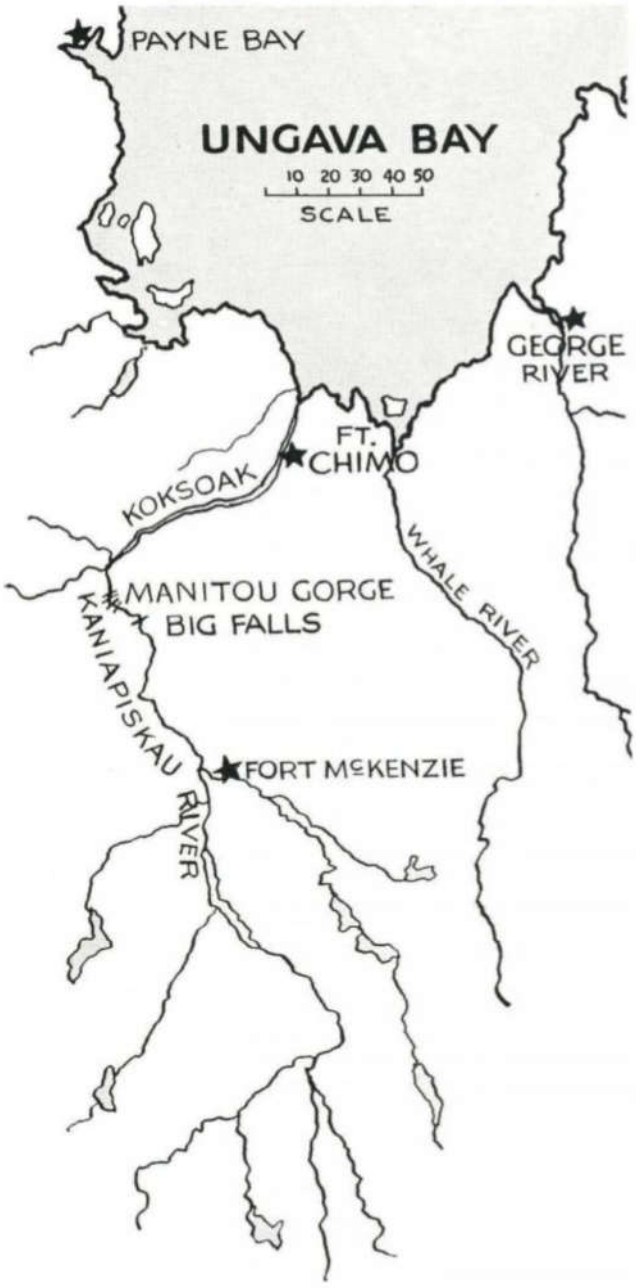


Story and Pictures
by C. N. Stephen

Unloading canoes at a portage.

EVER since Champlain traded with the Indians on the St. Lawrence, canoe brigades have formed a picturesque part of the Canadian fur trade. Modern methods of transport have almost done away with them, but in a few localities they are still commercially practicable. It was only fifteen years ago that the Rupert River brigade, connecting the interior of Quebec with historic Rupert's House on James Bay, was discontinued after running on schedule for a couple of centuries. A canoe brigade still connects Senneterre post on the C.N.R. with Woswonaby, and Oskelaneo on the same line with Obijuan and Mistassinny. But the most colourful of the few remaining is the Kok-so-ak River brigade, which runs between Fort Chimo, near Ungava Bay, and Fort McKenzie in central Quebec.

Fort Chimo, founded in 1830, lies some thirty miles from the sea on the Koksoak River. Fort McKenzie stands on the shore of a beautiful lake at the head of Swampy River, a five-mile tributary of the Kaniapiskau, which in turn runs into the Koksoak. It was established in 1916 by J. S. C. Watt, now of Rupert's



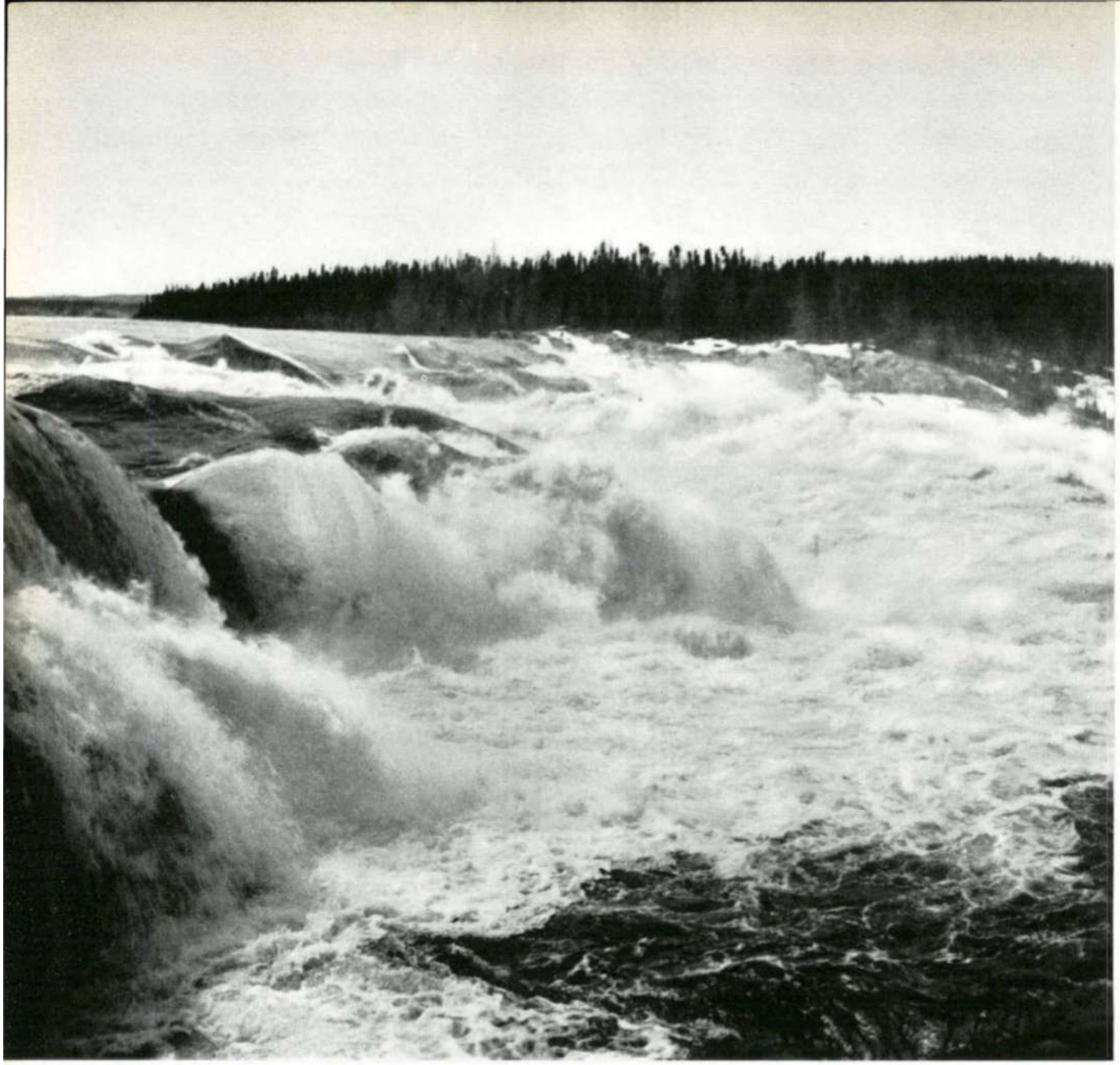
House, and then manager of Ungava Bay. The reason for building the post so far inland was to connect with the Indians from the St. Lawrence to the south and Hudson Bay to the west, and the post still serves this purpose well. Moreover, the number of locally bred hunters is increasing, and Fort McKenzie has been for some years now one of the Company's principal posts in eastern Canada.

The canoe brigade usually leaves McKenzie the first week in June, directly after the spring break-up, and starts on the return trip a week or so later, with goods that have been brought up by the *Nascopie* to Hebron and from there by the *Fort Garry* to Chimo. For the first fifty-five miles of the journey back to McKenzie, most of the freight is transported by the Fort Chimo fifteen-ton motor boat *Koksoak*, which makes two or three trips to a point called Burgess Landing. From there on, the freighting is done by canoe. More than half of the time is spent on long portages and swift rapids, where power boats would be useless.

Although several makes of canoes have been used on the Koksoak River, the one found to be best suited for the work is the twenty-two-foot Chestnut freighter. They take a load of from four to five thousand pounds each, and it takes five men to handle them. Sometimes only four men work the canoes; but five or even six are preferred, as at least three of them are required for tracking. The Koksoak River is well over a mile wide in places, so there is little or no protection from the weather; big canoes are therefore necessary, as they can take a good-sized load in weather that would prevent smaller canoes from travelling. The McKenzie Advance Outfit brigade consists of about forty-five men and nine or ten canoes, the same crews using the same canoes each year, and a boss for each who is responsible for his particular canoe and the freight carried in it. The life of these heavy canoes is about eight years, and at the end of that time they are ready for the scrap heap, having been re-covered at least once, and very few of the original ribs remaining in them.

There are only three real portages on the river route to McKenzie—the Manitou, Big Falls, and Second Falls. The others are only short portages, more or less rocky points, usually at bends in the river where the water is too swift to track a fully loaded canoe. However all the freight has to be unloaded at these small portages, and the canoes pulled up light. The Koksoak and Kaniapiskau rivers are really one and the same. The point of demarcation for the Koksoak is the Manitou Gorge, which is about ninety-five miles in from Ungava Bay. From the Manitou on, to its source in central Quebec, the river is called the Kaniapiskau. A difference is readily noticed in the two parts of the river. The country through which the Koksoak wends its way is sparsely wooded and its hills all of the same grey, dismal appearance. Immediately above the Manitou Gorge, however, it takes on a different aspect, the woods being much thicker and trees not so stunted, while the hills are of a different colour and formation.

The women do their share of the portaging.



The Little Falls are little only by comparison.

The first of the long portages, the Manitou, is rightly named the Devil's Gorge, as it is a deep gully with precipitous rocky sides and five or six miles of turbulent rushing water and whirlpools. The portage road along the Manitou is about four and a half miles long. This is the longest of the three big portages and the freight is relayed across in three dumps. The Big Falls portage is about a mile long, and the Second Falls slightly less, so the big freighting canoes and the freight can be carried from one end to the other without a stop. The usual load carried by the men is from one hundred to three hundred pounds. Our goods are packed specially for inland freighting and are not supposed to weigh more than 100 pounds, but quite a lot of them do, chiefly heavy bales of tent duck, chests of tea weighing 137 pounds gross, and of course barrels of pork and rolled oats. Quite a common load for an Indian is a bag of 98's flour with a 100-pound barrel of pork on top, a gross weight of 286 pounds. Strangely enough, it is not always the strongest looking men that carry the biggest loads though they of course have to keep up their reputation. Many of the younger men who look as if they couldn't carry their own weight can portage with the best of them when challenged.

On the whole the Indians are exceptionally good workers (the so-called civilized Indians of other districts not to be compared with the more primitive tribes of Naskapi, Montagnais, and Cree that inhabit the interior of Quebec), and a striking contrast is easily discernible when they are working side by side with the Eskimos. The Indian is more aggressive than the Eskimo, as is shown when unloading the supply ship at Fort Chimo or working on the river with the Eskimo crew of the *Koksoak*. Half way between Burgess Landing and Chimo is a two-mile rapid where the motor boat has to be unloaded and taken up light. The Indians are always on hand to unload the *Koksoak*

and track the freight up the rapids, and it is amusing to see them swarm over the motor boat, laughing and joking. They have it unloaded almost as quick as it takes to tell, and the canoes are well on their way up the rapids before the "Huskies" realize what is going on.

The women and children, as well as the men, do their share of the work on the portages, and sometimes they handle the whole of the freight alone. Once in particular, I remember, at the Second Falls, the women carried across more than thirty tons of freight in one day as fast as the men could bring it up to the portage in the canoes, the young children of five and six years carrying 24-pound sacks of flour and the women carrying anything up to 215 pounds each.

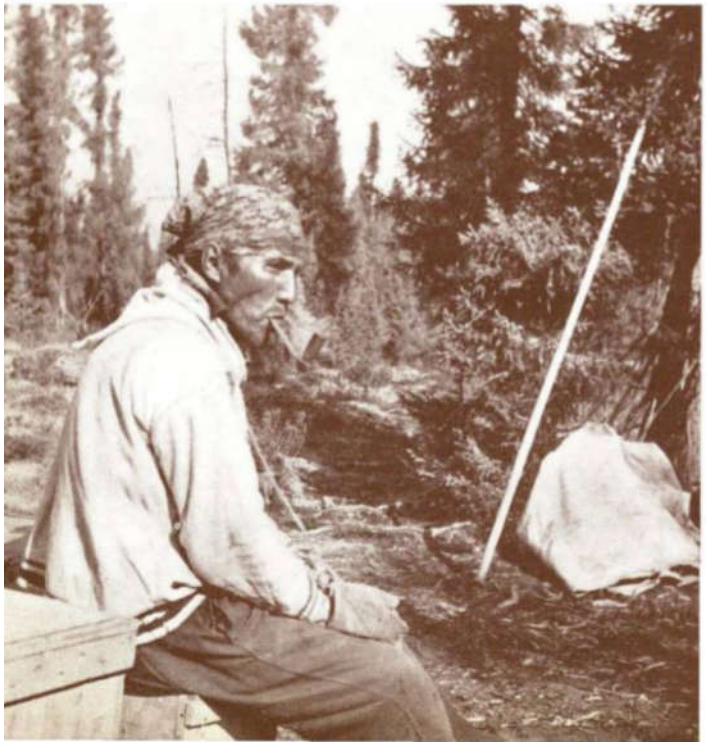
To give them a little encouragement, every woman and child, each time they carry a piece of freight across the portage, is paid. They are given metal counters of different denominations, according to the size of the load carried each time. These counters are handed in every night, and great is the competition to see who can earn the most in one day. Credits are given them for what they are worth, and they are paid off at the end of the trip. By taking the women and children on the freighting, considerable time is saved when handling from thirty to forty tons of freight. One would not think this is so, as the families are almost a complete load in themselves when camp has to be shifted. However, the work they do on the portages more than makes up for the time lost by carrying them in the canoes. From the point where the *Koksoak* lands the freight to Fort McKenzie, there are only three camps made that are not on the three big portages, so it will be easily seen that the families are more of an asset than otherwise.

Portage work is considered the hardest part of the freighting, especially on the Manitou, where it sometimes takes a week to get all the freight across. The hot sun and hard track takes the most out of the workers, and when that portage is cleared the others seem easy in comparison. To facilitate the work on the Manitou, a big farm cart is used to carry most of the heaviest pieces of freight, besides others that are awkward to carry, such as barrels of pork and rolled

Camp is made on Manitou Portage, and the canoes are turned over for the night.

Several men are needed to carry one of the big canoes up the first part of the Manitou Portage.

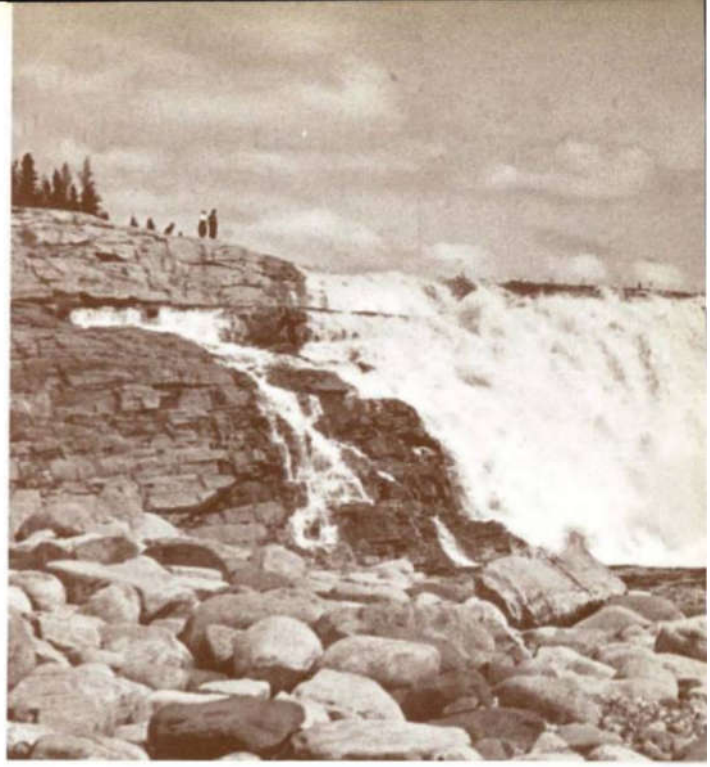
Time off for a smoke with an old stone pipe.



oats. The cart is pulled by the Indians, usually a couple of the older men in charge of a gang of young boys. The first third of the Manitou portage is all uphill work, but the second and third laps are flat and slightly down-hill, and are therefore much easier.

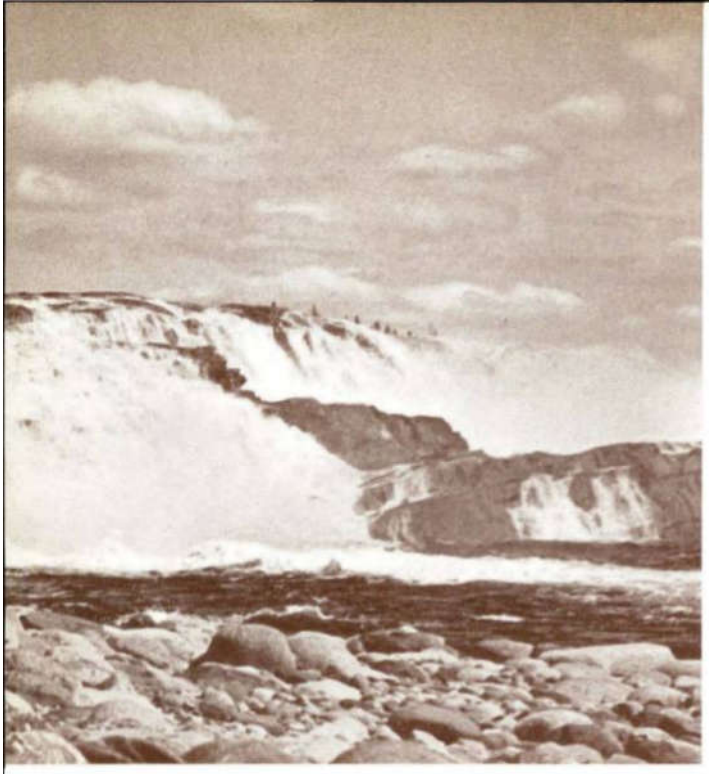
The usual procedure on first arriving at the Manitou is to make camp; then, while the men are engaged bringing the freight up by the canoes from the last dump, the women and youngsters start portaging to the top of the gorge. After everything has been taken to the second lap of the portage, camp is shifted to the other end and all hands start carrying again. When about two thirds of the freight is across, the men start freighting up the rapids, leaving the women to finish the portage work.

To feed the hungry members of the canoe brigade and their families for four or five weeks on the river takes quite a supply of grub. They get daily rations of "white man's grub," but this is augmented by fair quantities of fresh fish, which they are able to get almost all the time. When relaying the freight, everyone sets either a trout net or a number of hooks all along the river and takes his catch out on the way back to camp at night. On shifting camp the nets are taken up and reset again after camp is made that night. The procedure is the same on the next relay, so that the Indians have the advantage of setting their nets in all the best places, and not just where they happen to pitch their tents. Trade union hours are unheard of in Ungava, so we are not particular about how many hours a day we work. Usually, on a straight



The Big Falls stretch right across the Kaniapis

The author doles out the daily rations of "white man's grub"—in this case flour and shortening and sugar, while his dinner cooks on the camp stove.



au River. This is a favourite spot for fishing.

run to or from McKenzie we start very early and stop late, but on a regular freighting trip more reasonable hours are kept, depending on what part of the river we are on.

Work on these trips usually starts at six or seven in the morning. There is always more freight than can be carried by the canoes in one trip, so the relay system is used. Under this, the brigade goes forward with a full load for a day's travel, then deposits it and returns to camp anywhere between four and six p.m. This is repeated until the whole of the freight has been moved, the camp itself going forward with the last load to a point well beyond the dump. On the following day, the canoes go back empty to the dump and bring up the freight by stages to the new camp.

Although reasonable hours are kept when handling freight alone, there is no set rule when shifting camp. Usually all hands are tired after a hard day's work, so naturally everyone is in favour of a good night's rest. The night before camp is shifted is no exception, and everyone decides that there will be no early start in the morning. However, although it is agreed that no early break will be made the Indians usually turn in earlier than usual, knowing perfectly well that they will get very little sleep that night. Personally, I make sure that all my gear and the goods we use for rations and trade on the river are packed ready for an early start in the morning, and turn in with a faint hope that the break will not be too early.

The first indication of the camp coming to life is around three a.m., when the sudden clatter of a stove

An old farm cart, pulled by men and boys, is used to transport the heaviest pieces of freight across the Manitou Portage.

Barrels of pork and sacks of flour make heavy loads on the Big Falls Portage.

being pitched through a tent door starts the ball rolling. Others soon follow, and the noise of some thirty odd tents being pulled down would make one think the camp was being raided. Within the short space of twenty minutes or so the last canoe is on its way with all hands paddling as if possessed. No one has had a bite to eat before starting out, and at the first "mug up," three or four hours later, there is the usual argument as to who was the first to break camp, each one blaming the other for the early start. The culprit, strangely enough, is never found out.

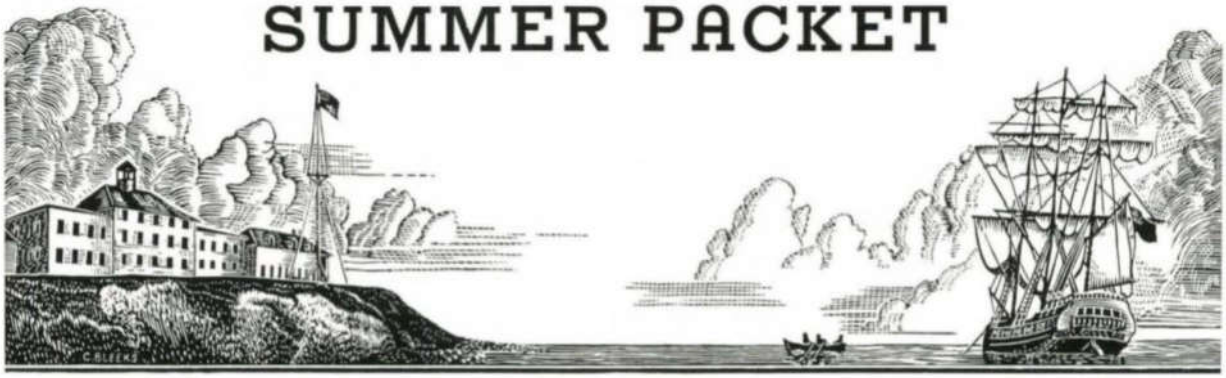
Needless to say, I never raise any objections to the early mornings, as it is all very advantageous to the work on hand so long as the freight is well looked after. The canoes generally keep together and always stop at the same place to "mug up" when freighting or shifting camp, there being only one exception to this rule. This is on the last leg of the journey and the day after the freight has been pushed up half way to the post from the camp. Scarcely any sleep is enjoyed the last night and the first canoe is usually on its way by one a.m., sometimes as early as midnight. It is a case of the devil take the hindmost, as it is a race to see which canoe gets to the post first. It is not always the first to get away that wins the race either, as there are twelve to fourteen hours hard paddling to be done, and the last canoe to get in is generally three hours or so behind the first arrival.

After the brigade's arrival at Fort McKenzie, when the last piece of freight has been checked and stored, the Indians are outfitted for the winter with the goods they have brought from Fort Chimo. And when that is finally done, they set off for their respective hunting grounds.

Above: "The families are almost a complete load in themselves when camp has to be shifted."

Below: Tracking unloaded canoes up the rapids. Those on shore pull on the bowlines, while the others push on the setting poles.

SUMMER PACKET



John Tod

The article on John Tod which appears in this issue calls to mind an item in the London *Times* of October 13, 1837, which strikingly illustrates the difficulties of inland transportation in those days:

"Yesterday Creole de Grasse, a man of colour, was brought before Mr. Broderip, the sitting magistrate (at Thames police office), on a charge of being concerned with the massacre of 11 persons belonging to a tribe of Hare Indians, at Mackenzie River, in the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company, in North America, in the winter of 1835-6.

"The prisoner was brought up in the custody of Mr. Tod, of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was sworn in as a peace officer by Mr. John Charles, factor, and magistrate of Rupert's Land, in British North America, for the purpose of taking him to Montreal by way of England to take his trial with his accomplices. . . .

"Mr. Broderip said he should commit the prisoner to Clerkenwell prison for a month, and if means could be found to forward him to Montreal before that time . . . he should order him to be brought up again and delivered to Mr. Tod."

Documents were produced to give the magistrate an explanation of this roundabout proceeding. The Canadian authorities had directed that the trial of three men accused of the murders should be held in the Lower province. Two of the prisoners were being taken there via Moose Factory, but "as it would be impossible to take all three together," the third man, de Grasse, was sent by way of England: "a less expensive mode than employing a crew expressly for his conveyance."

Correction

On the last page of the last *Beaver*, it was stated that the late Chief Trader Cornwallis King was the last of the old commissioned officers of the Company. Shortly after that statement appeared in print, we had a letter from J. Ogden Grahame of Victoria, B.C., who gave us the pleasantly surprising news that the old race of officers still lives on. He himself, it turns out, is really the last remaining representative of the Commissioned Gentlemen.

The son of James A. Grahame, who later became Chief Commissioner for the Company in Canada, he was born at Fort Vancouver in 1850, while it was still a Hudson's Bay post. At the age of sixteen he was sent to England round the Horn, and after joining the Company in London, was sent back by the same route in 1867 to take up his duties in Fort Victoria.

His father, who had been made Chief Factor in 1861, was appointed Chief Commissioner in 1873, and the following year his son moved east to Fort Garry to become his secretary. The next nine years were spent there, or with the Commissioner on his travels. Made a Junior Chief Trader in 1877 and a Chief Trader in 1879, Ogden Grahame went west again in 1883 to take charge of Thompson's River district at Kamloops. In that capacity, he built the Vernon post in 1887 and the Nelson store in 1892.

He retired from the service in 1902, and since then has been living in Victoria, where he is still flourishing at the age of ninety-one. With the characteristic modesty of an old Company man, Mr. Grahame says that he has nothing to relate that would be of interest to *Beaver* readers. But we are still hoping. . . .

S. to N. and Return

The philatelists are at it again, and here's the prize story to date: C. E. Wilson of Ngaruawahia, New Zealand, tells us that after reading the Packet note "Farthest North P. O." in the December 1939 *Beaver*, he swung into action and posted a letter addressed to himself at Half Moon Bay, Stewart Island, the most southerly post office in New Zealand. From there it went across the Pacific to Port Stanley, Falkland Islands, the most southerly post office in the British Empire, and probably in the world. And from there it went all the way to Craig Harbour, the "farthest north P. O.," where the postmaster of the *Nascopie* post marked it and started it on its way back to Ngaruawahia. Mr. Wilson posted it on January 13, 1940, and received it ten months and six days later. If any other philatelist can beat that, we'd like to hear about it.

Inspiration

In times of great national endeavour, people readily turn to the past for inspiration. A first class American magazine some time ago remarked that the people of the United States are renewing their faith in American ideals by visiting their historic shrines in great numbers. "The supposedly dusty, musty historical museums," said this magazine, "have become an effective line of defence against the forces that tend to overthrow our ideals and institutions." And adult education bodies are discovering that the history museum is the most powerful instrument available for propagating patriotic knowledge.

In Canada, too, the same fact is noticeable, and the attendance at the Company Historical Exhibit has shown a considerable increase during the past year. In 1939 the registered attendance was 37,490. In 1940 it was 43,440. And the first four months of this year show an increase of 1,600 over the same four months last year. When it is considered that, according to tests made at the Exhibit, only about thirty-seven per cent of visitors register, the actual attendance figure for last year is stepped up to 117,400, which is over 16,000 more than 1939's.

Visitors to Winnipeg find that the Exhibit, which is on the fourth floor of the retail store, is one of the chief sights of the city; for besides illustrating the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, it is the only fur trade museum in Canada—and perhaps on this continent. Moreover, there's nothing dusty or musty about it. It's bright, clean, and attractive. This month, new exhibits will be set up, and the museum as a whole rehabilitated.

Poetry in a Blanket

One of the files in this department is fat with unsolicited letters extolling the merits of Hudson's Bay "Point" blankets. They reveal that the history of some of these masterpieces of the weaver's skill is often as colourful as the blankets themselves. But undoubtedly the most lyrical tribute we have yet encountered was written by M. I. Pitkin in a recent number of "The Better Way," published by *Cosmopolitan Magazine*.

Mr. Pitkin's tribute is far too long to publish here; but we cannot resist reprinting this part of it—not, of course, for the purpose of advertising our blankets, but merely for the sheer pleasure they give the reader. . . .

"Granted you know your North Country and at one time or another have spread a genuine Point on wild marsh-hay or an aromatic bed of balsam boughs, you'll discern ever after a magic tapistry woven in and out its vivid texture—a series of exquisite and nostalgic memories of hardy nights and days in the northern bush.

"A grizzled Canuck guide can look at one of these blankets—or so they say—and see a thousand gorgeous lakes, like bowls of cobalt set on a cloth of pine. Wrought in its warp and woof he'll also point you out, perhaps, a black bear seated in a stony creek and lazily batting suckers ashore with his paws. Or he'll run his trigger finger along starry old moccasin trails and trap streams to where a moose munches succulent lily roots at the bottom of an inlet. And far across a silent lake, as the woolly sky deepens to orange behind a muskeg swamp he'll like as not spy you up a lone hawk, or a great northern loon quietly preening himself after his evening meal. It's even whispered, up Canada way, that ancient trappers, long since retired into town, can still hear the horned owl hoot, the woodpecker hammering his way to a grub, and the white-throat's silver singing, when they pull a Point blanket closer around their ears on a winter's night."

Contributors

The contributors' column for this issue stretches all the way from Vancouver to Montreal and from Fort McKenzie to Cleveland, Ohio. . . MARIUS BARBEAU, F.R.S.C., LL.L., etc., ethnologist at the National Museum in Ottawa, is a prolific writer on various Canadian subjects in both languages. He was the author of "Old Port Simpson" in the September 1940 *Beaver*. . . . MARTIN BOVEY, who travels, fishes, and takes pictures in the North, lives in Concord, Mass. He contributed articles to the December '37 and September '38 issues. . . . F. HENRY JOHNSON is a Vancouver writer who took his M.A. in history, at the University of British Columbia. . . . AXEL NEILSEN of Winnipeg, an ex-fur-trader, has been a frequent contributor during the past two years. . . . Mrs. JOSEPHINE ROBERTSON is a member of the staff of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. She took the Mackenzie River trip last year and wrote a daily column about it for her paper. . . .TERRY ROWE is a staff photographer with the *Winnipeg Tribune* who often visits Montreal Lake post, just outside Prince Albert National Park. . . . C. N. STEPHEN is post manager at Fort McKenzie, and as such accompanies the Koksoak River Brigade on its voyagings each summer. . . . JOHN WATSON is building assistant in the Fur Trade Department. . . . ALBERT L. WILK is a student in zoology at the University of Alberta, who has done much field work around Churchill. . . . P. ROY WILSON, A.R.I.B.A., A.R.C.A., etc., is a Montreal architect who lectures at McGill University.

Awards

Last year, *The Beaver* succeeded in winning the Canadian house magazine contest sponsored by Provincial Paper Company. Now it has been fortunate enough to win the annual contest for North American house magazines devoted to public relations. This international competition is put on by the House Magazine Institute, and the awards were made at a dinner in New York on May 16. Despite a tempting offer of succulent poplar bark and water lilies, *The Beaver* had to decline the invitation to attend. Much of the credit for its successes, it should be pointed out, must go to the two firms whose names appear at the bottom of page 58.

ARCHITECT and ADVENTURER

by P. Roy Wilson
Montreal

Sir Christopher Wren, architect of famous buildings in London and Williamsburg, was an outstanding member of the Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay.

Sir Christopher Wren in 1711 by Sir Godfrey Kneller. From the National Portrait Gallery, London.

THE Hudson's Bay Company has been directed down the centuries by many distinguished citizens of old London. But the most brilliant of them all, without a doubt, was Sir Christopher Wren, whose architectural masterpieces are so much in the public eye to-day. From 1679 to 1683, while he was designing some of his most celebrated churches, Wren was a member of the Committee with Prince Rupert and others, and often in the absence of the Governor and Deputy Governor he was asked to take the chair at meetings of the Company of Adventurers.

An architect's business capacity is generally supposed to be inversely proportionate to his artistic ability. But if this is the rule, Wren was a shining exception. Without a keen commercial sense, he would never have been elected to the Committee; and his practicality in money matters is also evidenced by the great number of fine, enduring buildings he produced at low cost, at a time when civil and foreign wars, the plague, and the Great Fire of London had impoverished the realm.

Christopher Wren was born, the son of a clergyman, at East Knoyle, Wiltshire, on October 20, 1632. He was a prodigy, yet lived a full and famous life, and died revered by all at the ripe age of ninety-one. When only fourteen he entered Wadham College, Oxford; took his degree at eighteen, was a fellow of All Souls at twenty-one, professor of astronomy at Gresham College at twenty-five; and Savilian professor at Oxford at twenty-eight.

From his boyhood he was keenly interested in the stars, and at the age of thirteen he dedicated to his father an astronomical instrument which he called *Panorganum Astronomicum*. This instrument, one of his many inventions, was intended to track the path of planets and show their effect upon the recurring seasons of the year. It may not have worked: but it showed that this boy of thirteen was able to grasp the higher mathematics involved in the graphic recording of the paths of heavenly bodies and their power over the seasons.

Wren's father was himself a man of considerable intellect. He, with a few famous men such as Dr. Wilkins, Warden of Wadham College, were expert in natural philosophy, and were the founders of the Royal Society which has maintained its pre-eminence to the present day. While an undergraduate at Wadham, Christopher was looked upon as such a "prodigious young scholar" that he was permitted to attend the meetings held by the Oxford branch of this society.

It appears from the very meagre records available that, while professor of astronomy at Gresham College, Wren had the use of a 36-foot glass. Judging from slightly later drawings of intended instruments at the

A view of London, from a map of 1610 in the H B C historical collection. Old St. Paul's towers above the other City churches. Its wooden steeple, the highest in the world (520 feet), had been burned in 1561. London Bridge, covered with houses, is seen on the right. The heads of criminals adorn the nearer gate. Compare with the plan opposite.

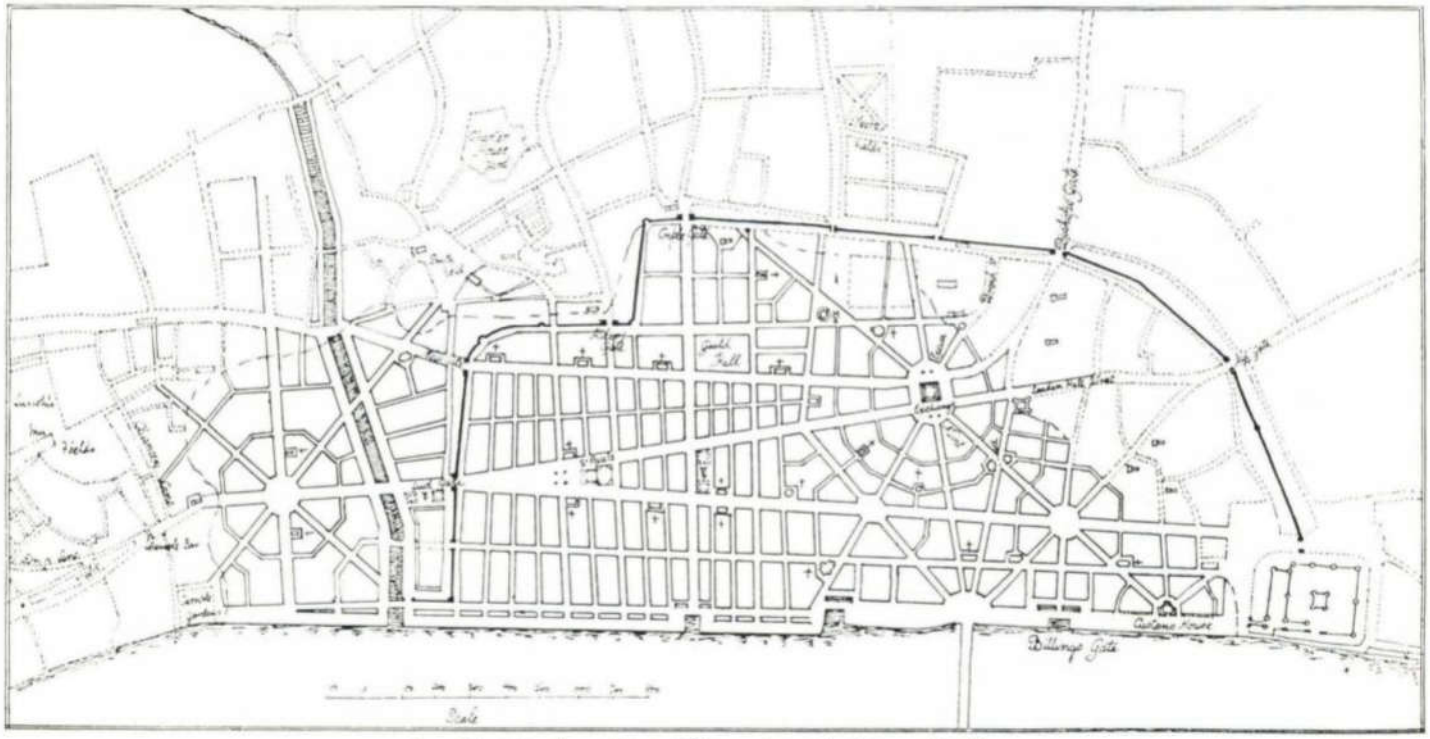
famous Greenwich Observatory founded by Charles II in 1675, this telescope was a tremendous favour to be bestowed on one so young. All his life Wren was interested in weatherclocks, barometers, and telescope lenses, and was always inventing new devices. He was, however, far too generous in dispersing, not only knowledge, but the actual notes on his inventions and discoveries. The result is that we have practically no objects that actually connect us with Wren, the astronomer. In 1660 he invented a graphical method of calculating eclipses, which is in use to-day; though by some twist of fate it was for many years attributed to a foreigner. Though no architect, up to this time, had ever approached the quantity—not to mention the quality—of his architectural works, he still had time to continue his astronomical studies. According to Ward's *Lives*, when, in 1671, he designed the monument commemorating the extent of the Great Fire, this "learned and ingenious architect built it hollow, that it might serve as a tube to discover the parallax of the earth by different distances of the star in the head of the Dragon from the zenith, at different seasons of the year. But finding it was liable to be shaken by the motion of coaches and carts, almost constantly passing by, he laid aside that thought."

In the library at Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, there is an old History of Astronomy published in 1766, which belonged to one of the old fur traders—probably Peter Fidler. And it is interesting to read in it that a "Mr. Rowley had ground an object glass to be fixed in one of the towers of St. Paul's Church, at the top of the Newel of the Stair-Case, which would serve as a very long Telescope to observe the Stars near the Zenith, in order to determine their Parallax." But Sir Isaac Newton "would never consent to its being put up. For as the Building in settling might alter the situation of this Telescopic Tower, he was afraid lest Conclusions should be drawn, in so nice a point, from precarious and uncertain Observations."

But while Wren never entirely forsook his first love, astronomy, he became enamoured of architecture during his professorship at Oxford. In 1662, the vice-chancellor of the university enquired of Bishop Sprat where the astronomy professor was, and the reason of his absence so long after the beginning of term. Wren's good friend replied that "the drawing of lines in Sir Henry Savill's school was not altogether of so great a concernment for the benefit of Christendom as the rebuilding of St. Paul's or the fortifying of Tangier." When Wren was not building at Cambridge, he was building at Oxford, instead of lecturing. His famous uncle, Matthew Wren, Bishop of Ely, was his first client in this new profession, and commissioned him to build Pembroke College chapel in the nearby town of Cambridge. Wren, though only thirty-one, and new to the game, was quite equal to the occasion and designed the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford, and Trinity College Library, Cambridge, at the same time. He was also consulted by the king, previous to the Fire of London, on keeping the fabric of old St. Paul's from collapse, and it was the fascination of this task that really decided him to engage in architecture as a profession. Astronomy, and the kindred sciences, thereby suffered a loss that they could ill afford at this time; for such was the state of mathematics in the average mind that Pepys was made First Lord of the Admiralty, chiefly because he was able to multiply and divide.

"Old" St. Paul's, that is, previous to the Fire, was an enormous Gothic cathedral, somewhat like Norwich, with a Saxon and Norman foundation and a very lofty spire. The "Gothick rudeness of the old Design" evidently did not appeal to Wren, for in his report of May, 1666, he proposed to remodel the entire structure, except the choir, "after a good Roman manner." Inigo Jones, the first of the English architects of the Renaissance, had already added a "classic" porch, which was much admired, and popular taste was

This is how the City of London would have been laid out after the Great Fire if Sir Christopher Wren had had his way. The thick line is London Wall.



Sir Christopher Wren's Plan for rebuilding London. From a Drawing in the All Souls' Collection.

ripe for this new style which had fired Wren's imagination during the previous winter. He had gone to Paris to escape the Plague that was then ravishing London, and so impressed was he by the Louvre, then in building, and by domes and prints of domes that he saw in the French capital, that he returned to his native land with his mind full of Renaissance motifs, and proposed, what we to-day would think untenable, that a large, many-columned dome should be erected over the crossing of an English Gothic cathedral.

However, opportunity's hand was already raised to knock, not once but again and again. On September 2nd, 1666, five days after the meeting of the dean and chapter of the cathedral at which Wren's rebuilding scheme was propounded, fire broke out in the King's bakery and spread rapidly through the wooden city, devouring plague-infested slums and mediaeval churches alike until the greater part of the "City" had been consumed. Old St. Paul's was almost entirely destroyed, and eighty-five churches burned to the ground.

This was a great opportunity, not only for Wren, the surveyor-general, but for all Londoners. The one made the most of it; the others allowed their conservatism, their mediaeval disorderliness, and their commercial greed to blind them to the possibilities of a grand new plan for the city. A critical review of the Buildings of London written in 1734, eleven years after Wren's death, says:

"The Fire of London furnished the most proper occasion that can ever happen to any City to rebuild it with Pomp and regularity; this Wren foresaw, and as we are told offered a scheme for that purpose which would have made it the wonder of the World. He proposed to have laid out one large street from Aldgate to Temple Bar, in the middle of which was to have been a large square capable of containing the new Church of St. Paul's, with a proper distance of the view all around it; whereby that huge building would not have been cooped up as it is at present. . . . He further proposed to rebuild all the Parish Churches, in such manner as to be seen at the end of every vista of houses, and disposed in such distances from each other, as to appear neither too thick nor too thin in Prospect; but give a proper heightening to the whole Bulk of the City as it filled the Landscape. Lastly he proposed to build all the Houses Uniform, and supported on a Piazza, like that of Covent Garden, and by the water side, from the Bridge to the Temple he had planned a long and broad Wharf or Key, where he designed to have ranged all the Halls that belong to the Companies of the City, [shortly to include the Hudson's Bay Company] with proper Warehouses for Merchants between to vary the Edifices, and make it at once, one of the most beautiful, and most useful ranges of structures in the World. But the hurry of rebuilding and the disputes about property prevented this glorious scheme from taking place."

In addition to the great part of the business district which has been laid waste during the present war, six of Wren's famous city churches have already been gutted. Of these St. Stephen Walbrook, built in 1674-1676, and St. Bride, Fleet Street, 1680, were among the most brilliant of his designs. Others that we hope may rise again from their ruins—just as Wren built and coloured them, and not as later decorators and stained glass manufacturers made them—are St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury (1680), St. Vedast (1697-

Greenwich Hospital. One of the end pavilions with its colonnade. (W. F. Taylor.)

98), St. Andrew of the Wardrobe (1692), and St. Lawrence Jewry (1671-80). Just as the Cloth Hall at Ypres was the greatest architectural loss of the last war, so are these churches, together with the Guild Hall, the greatest architectural loss of this war, to date. But there was such an outburst of indignation throughout the English-speaking world, as well as in other civilized countries, when they were destroyed, that it should not be difficult to find the money to rebuild them after the war. There are sufficient records of these churches to do this faithfully, but the restorers must remember several changes have taken place in regard to them which might possibly be rectified when rebuilding.

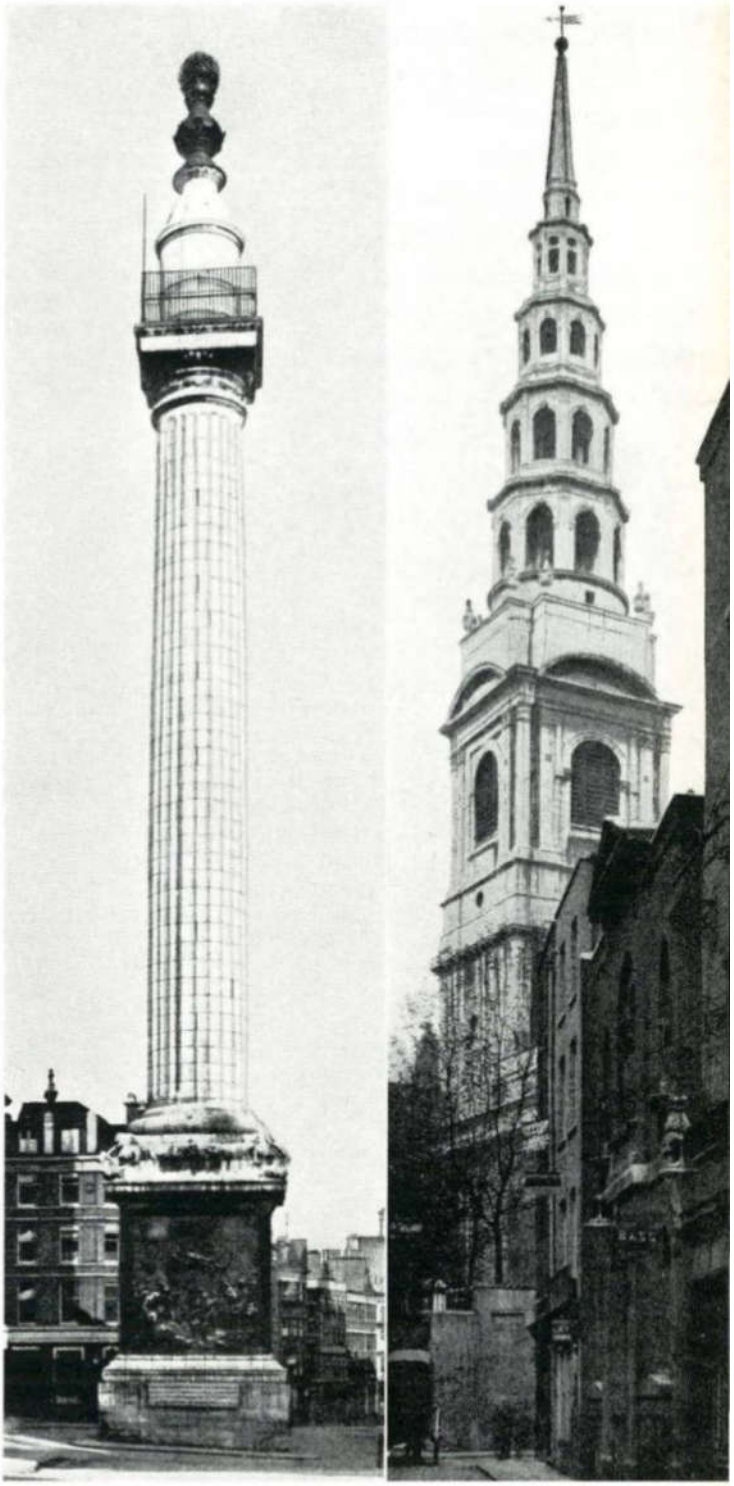
As stated previously, Wren "proposed to rebuild all the parish churches in such a manner as to be seen at the end of every vista of houses." This isolation and axial planning was not followed in his day, but it can be when reconstruction commences. The seventeenth century buildings were half the height of those which crowd, or did crowd, the churches today; so that isolating them by means of a churchyard, not a cemetery, is even more necessary nowadays. And a church spire is the ideal object for closing a vista in axial planning of cities.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the interiors will be coloured with the same restraint that Wren used, not with as many different colours as the nineteenth century decorators could find a place for. The stained glass, also, could be vastly improved; it has most likely all been blown into the street now, in any case. Wren probably never intended that bright coloured glass should be used, but pale shades in some simple geometrical patterns. The brilliant jewel-like effect of the great Gothic cathedral windows is only seen to the best advantage when the adjoining wall is plain in colour.

Altogether, Wren rebuilt fifty London churches. Most of them, being in the Renaissance style, had to conform to strict rules of proportion. But throughout this great program of reconstruction, he managed to achieve an amazing versatility of design.

In addition to the parish churches, he designed a remarkable number of other architectural masterpieces. Charles II had pulled down the historic "mannor of East Greenwich" (as owners of which the English kings had signed the charters of Virginia and New Jersey as well as that of the Hudson's Bay Company) and a new building, now known as Greenwich Hospital, was put up, designed partly by Inigo Jones and partly by Wren. He was also the architect of an addition to Hampton Court Palace, and Chelsea Hospital (to mention some of the larger ones) while his designs were often sent to the colonies, as in the case of Williamsburg, Virginia, and Kingston, Jamaica. Except when he attempted Gothic, all his buildings were stamped with that hall-mark of architectural genius, a personal style. A Wren building is recognizable anywhere.

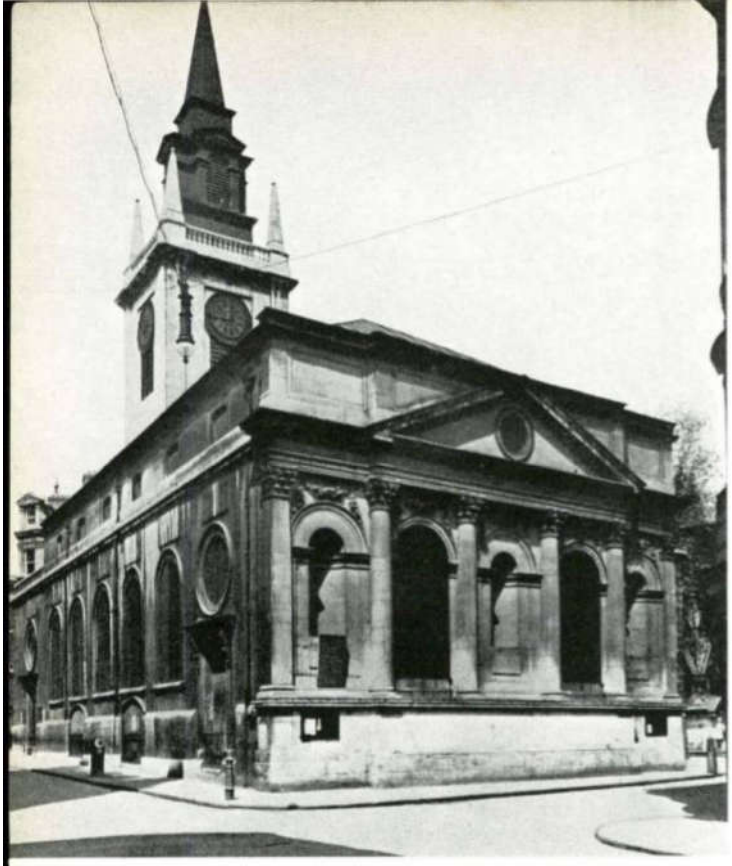
There were other sides to Sir Christopher's genius of which little is known. In Dr. Sprat's *History of the Royal Society*, written in 1667, he gives Wren the credit for inventing the practice of injection into the blood stream, which led to blood transfusion and, of recent years, the blood bank. His first experiments were made with opium introduced by means of a syringe attached to a quill, and injected in varying quantities into "divers creatures" which were thereby "intoxicated, killed or revived according to the quality



Left: Wren's monument to the first Great Fire of London. A circular staircase inside leads to the platform surrounded by railings.

Right: St. Bride's, Fleet street, built in 1680, one of the most beautiful of Wren's spires. The church was gutted during the second Great Fire last year.

(All illustrations in this article have been taken from the Wren bi-centenary number of the "Architects' Journal," London.)



Above: St. Lawrence Jewry (1671-80) has also been destroyed by German bombs. (Ingleson C. Goodison.)

of the Liquor injected." Further evidence of his knowledge of biology was shown in his illustrations to Willis's *Cerebri Anatome* published in 1680.

Wren's connection with the Hudson's Bay Company was by no means a nominal one. His holdings increased from £200 in 1679 to £1,200 in 1683, so that in comparison to the other twenty-nine shareholders he had a fair proportion of the total stock of £10,500. In addition, his financial assistance to the Company often entailed the lending of considerable sums to outfit ships sailing to the Bay; and his knowledge of astronomy may well have proved useful to the captains of those ships in their voyages through the uncharted seas.

In the records of the Royal Society, Dr. Sprat sums up Sir Christopher's achievements, and in conclusion he says: "Nor do I fear that this will be thought too much, which I have said concerning him: For there is a peculiar reverence due to so much excellence, cover'd with so much modesty. And it is not Flattery but Honesty, to give him his just praise; who is so far from usurping the fame of other men, that he endeavours with all care to conceal his own."

It is a eulogy of which any man would be proud. Yet perhaps a nobler one is found in his epitaph, inscribed above his tomb in St. Paul's:

Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice.

Below: St. Paul's Cathedral, noblest monument to the genius of Wren. (Aerofilms Ltd.)

BOOK REVIEWS

KABLOONA, written and illustrated by Gontran de Poncins in collaboration with Lewis Galantiere. Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, and New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, Inc., 1941. 371 pages.

NOTE: This Book-of-the-Month Club choice for April, part of which has been published in the "Atlantic Monthly" and in the "Readers' Digest," has been widely reviewed, mostly by people who are not familiar with the North. Here is the viewpoint of a Hudson's Bay fur-trader, R. H. G. Bonnycastle, who not long ago was manager of the Western Arctic District—the region which is the locale of "Kabloona."

KABLOONA is a grand book, and everyone who has had anything to do with the Eskimos, especially anyone at any time connected with the Western Arctic, should have a copy. I am positive they will revel in it as I did. For the layman whose knowledge of the Eskimos has been gained from school books, magazine articles and movies, here is an authentic, absorbing and detailed description of these most fascinating and lovable people.

The book was written, and illustrated with excellent sketches and photographs (some of which have appeared in *The Beaver*) by a Frenchman, Gontran de Poncins, who came out from France in 1938 expressly to live with and study the Eskimos. He based himself at the H B C King William Land post, living with Paddy Gibson, the post manager, and they were the only two white men within hundreds of miles.

From King William Land "the Count" (he is a viscount) made long and short expeditions with the Eskimos in fall, winter and spring under all sorts of conditions, including the bitterest and most severe of that hard land. On these sorties he shared fully the lives of the natives, ate their food, lived in their snow houses and suffered most vividly all the painfully brutal hardships which they know only as part of their normal existence.

The Count translates the Eskimo word *Inuit*, which is the term by which the Eskimos refer to themselves, as meaning "Men, pre-eminently" and constantly uses it to express the calibre of manhood, and the skill in meeting the conditions of life, which they must have to exist. My judgment is that the Count himself is also a "man pre-eminently" to have been able to "take it" as he did and come to love it. The hardships described in the book were at least equalled and probably exceeded on the voyage back to Vancouver in the *Audrey B* with only two companions, when the 2,000-mile crossing of the North Pacific was made in a flimsy 100-foot motor boat through violent storms which by all laws should have sent them to the bottom time after time. Perhaps we shall have the story of this voyage in some future book.

I simply chuckled my way through Kabloona. The author's language is so descriptive and so vivid. Many of the people and scenes and practices in the book were familiar ones to me, and he brought them back so clearly with so many forgotten details. Who in the Western Arctic won't recognize Frenchy Chartrand roaring out his stories of an evening, glistening with sweat from his own eloquence and the warmth of his excellent Arctic clothing? And what more aptly describes that other famous Arctic character, Ole Andreasen, than "rosy and round, his bright eyes winking as he told story upon story"? I can see those eyes and hear those stories again. Angus Gavin, discoverer of the Ross's Goose breeding grounds, also gets his share of attention when the author visits Perry River post and describes him as "he who knows more about the Eskimos than any white man in the north."

De Poncins spares nothing of the gory details of domestic life of a people who have to live like animals to live at all. We who use soap galore, toothbrushes, and handkerchiefs,—to mention only an example or two—are bound to experience some shocks when we come up against the practices of people who have none of these most elementary things, people who are dependent for most of what they eat on what they kill individually. The author was sensitive to every detail, and this is why I think I prefer books about the Eskimos by people who have not been too long amongst them. These details hit newcomers in the eye, but are frequently overlooked if they have become a familiar part of everyday life. As he says, "I was too new in the Arctic to see in the igloo anything but filth," and so he describes a somewhat revolting but most interesting filth which more seasoned campaigners would no longer have noticed.

The descriptions of trading are gorgeous—that fascinating interplay between post manager and native, between representatives of two distinct ages, the stone age and modern times. It sounds easy for the trader, but he must satisfy his customer, and to be able to do that must understand his psychology, which is so much more difficult to understand than that of our contemporaries.

Delightful too is the description of post life. H B C men will love this: "Were I a Hudson's Bay man I would not change with any shop assistant in the world. What! Get up at seven in the morning, run like mad to the underground, get a dressing down each time I was criminally late five minutes, lunch in half an hour, and spend my life restless and worrying about my job! Not me! As Post Manager I should get up when I pleased, and take my time over my coffee. . . . And what had I to worry about? Coal enough for three years, yeast enough for fifteen, so much jam that I didn't know what to do with it."

There is a good word-picture of the cosiness of the dwelling at the post. "In the inner room Gibson and I had our living quarters. Here we ate, read, chatted and mused for whole hours together, each sitting in his own corner while the wind sent the wireless mast swaying in the air and piled up the snow in great drifts. Paddy would go over his accounts and dream of a great day of trading. I would study the Eskimo language and write up my notes. . . . Paddy had done wonders with his living room. . . . It was warm and intimate. . . . There was a kind of bourgeois cosiness that was unbelievable. . . . Were it not for the snow bank it would be impossible to tell this house from an average suburban shanty." Everyone who has spent any time in the Arctic can conjure up that picture and the peace and content it reflects, and most of

those who are now Outside will do it with a certain wistfulness.

I don't know whether or not to resent the Count's intrusion in the book into Paddy Gibson's domestic life and routine, and I shall be interested to hear the latter's reaction to it. Paddy was kindness and helpfulness personified so far as the Count was concerned, and the author admits it; but he goes into considerable detail about how Paddy wanted things just so, the stove damper at a certain pitch, tea pot in a certain place, and so on. (Why shouldn't he, in his own house?) He goes on to tell how he came to dislike Paddy, hate his little ways and his figures of speech. True, he acknowledges later his feelings were entirely unjustified and unfair, and were merely the result of what happens in the polar regions to a man from Outside.

People who know the North will recognize the situation as purely a matter of nerves when two people are living together in complete isolation from other whites. Probably most of us have experienced similar sensations and were ashamed of them afterwards. Anyway de Poncins got over it: "Dear old Paddy: in a flash all the rancour of weeks died out of my heart." Actually there were probably never two finer people thrown together in this way than Gibson and de Poncins.

All this may sound as if personal knowledge of the Arctic and some of its inhabitants is necessary to enjoyment of the book. Actually, this is not so. And this is borne out by its excellent reception in the Press and its selection by the Book-of-the-Month Club.

Gontran de Poncins traces his attitude towards the Eskimos, beginning with curiosity, disgust, impatience, and intolerance, through miseries, hardships, and months of common toil, to a final feeling of great admiration for their manly qualities. And in the end, he did not want to leave their lonely land. He had found a sense of brotherhood with these primitive Eskimos who, though separated from him by 20,000 years of civilization, remained for him, in the last analysis, "men, pre-eminently."

THE JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN JAMES COLNETT, 1789-1791. Edited with introduction and notes by His Honour Judge Howay. Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1940. xxxi+*328 pages.*

COLNETT'S journal has a twofold interest. To begin with, it throws new and interesting light on the Nootka Sound "incident" of 1789. Colnett was the man in command of the British trading ships which were seized by the Spaniards, and over a hundred pages of his journal are devoted to the year and four days which passed between the seizure of the *Argonaut* and his release from the "Cruelty, Robbery, and Oppressive treatment of the Spaniards of New Spain." In an appendix Judge Howay prints a translation of the diary of Martinez, the Spanish commander at Nootka, and the personal narratives of the two people chiefly concerned in the "incident" thus make their first appearance in print between the covers of the same book.

The two stories conflict on many points, but apparently it was Colnett's determination to establish a permanent trading settlement at or near Nootka which impelled Martinez to take drastic action. Ironically, that action, instead of safeguarding Spain's claims, was to prove her undoing in the North Pacific. The seizure of the *Argonaut* and her consorts led to the celebrated Nootka Sound controversy, which brought Great Britain and Spain to the verge of war, and by the convention signed between the two countries in October, 1790, Spain was forced to abandon her sweeping claims to the North Pacific Coast. The way was thus cleared for British trading and exploration in the area, and, ultimately, for British sovereignty over what is now the Province of British Columbia.

In the second place, the journal is an interesting addition to the many logs and diaries relating to the maritime fur trade which have been printed in recent years. Colnett made a habit of keeping copies of most of the letters and documents relating to his trade and adventures, and these make his journal a valuable source book for the period, especially as Judge Howay has supplemented the text with an appendix in which are printed the licenses from the East India Company and the South Sea Company under which Colnett was trading. The conditions of the time, the predatory nature of the maritime fur trade, the ruthless fashion in which both natives and fur resources were treated and exploited, all appear vividly in these pages. They throw light upon the origin of many problems which the Hudson's Bay Company was to encounter a generation later, when it entered the coastal trade in these same waters.—*W. Kaye Lamb.*

PAINTED ARROWS, by Mary Weekes; illustrated. Thomas Nelson & Sons, Toronto and New York, 1941. 262 pages.

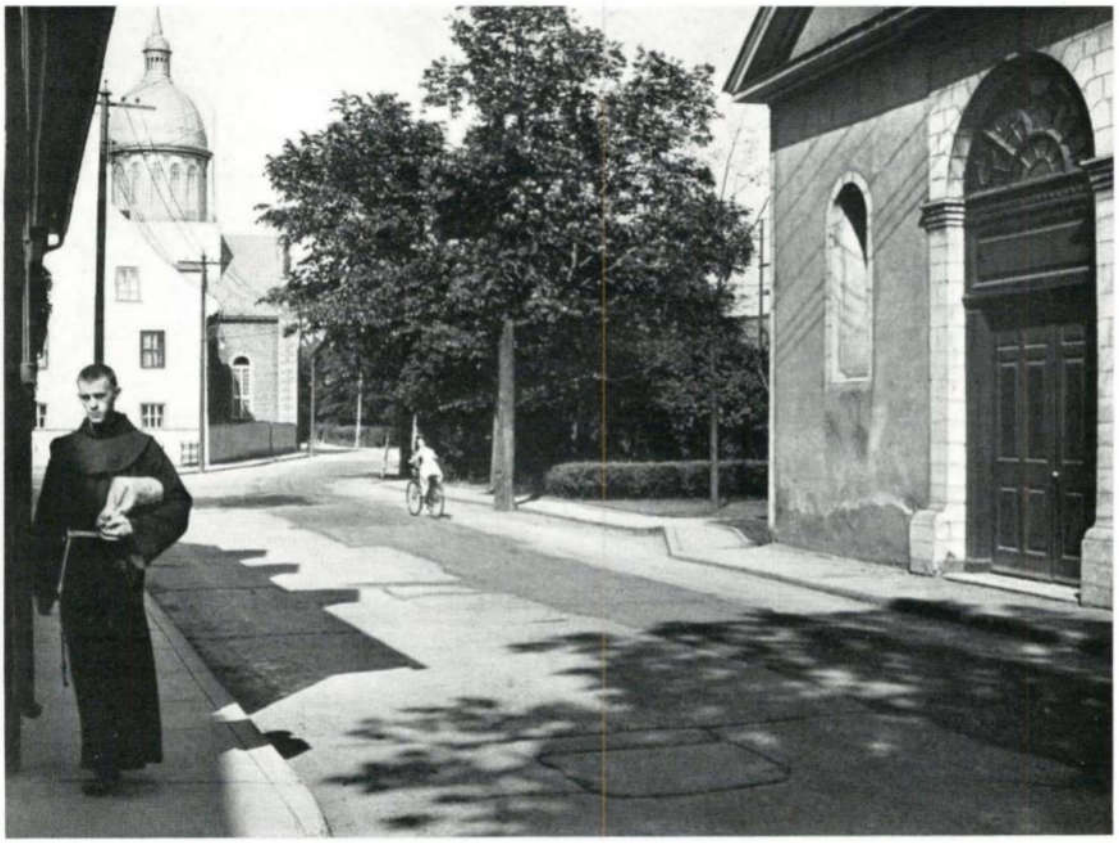
ANY youngster who has ever played Indian will gobble this in one long stretch. It has all the elements of adventure and thrill that the comics-addict requires, plus lots of brisk detail about how our forerunners on the prairie lived and sang and talked and hunted a hundred years ago.

Painted Arrows tells the story of an exciting summer in the life of young Paul Savard and that of his swift horse, Flash. Paul's trader father took them to a camp of the Assiniboines and to friendship with the chief's son, Dying Loon. Paul and his horse got abducted by a treacherous Blackfoot. How they succeeded in escaping this and subsequent misfortunes, and made their way to safety through hostile country by the aid of Dying Loon's painted arrows, are guaranteed to hold any lad's interest to the last page.

A hundred years ago in the buffalo country are as yesterday to Mary Weekes because she heard all these tales at first hand from two aged men who in their young days had lived and hunted and traded there. From Norbert Welsh, last of the buffalo hunters, and from the Hudson's Bay Company's patriarch, the late Chief Trader William Cornwallis King, as well as from her Indian friends in the Qu'Appelle Valley, Mrs. Weekes collected all they could tell of the tribal way before the white man came to out-smart his red brother.

This lore permeates the pages of *Painted Arrows*. Paul is a resourceful encyclopedia of the customs of prairie Indians, and explains everything as he goes along.

This book is skilfully illustrated by Orson Lowell, and very well printed indeed by Thomas Nelson & Sons. A sequel for girls is already under way.—*Alice MacKay.*



Radisson and Groseilliers lived on this street, which was a trail in Three Rivers, P.Q., back in 1634. Beyond the Recollet friar is the white gable of the Ursuline Convent, 1697. On the right is the old chapel of the Recollets, who arrived in the village the same year as the H B C was founded. It is now an Anglican church. Col. Burton, later Governor at Boston, had his headquarters in the Recollets' monastery in 1760. (S.I. de la Mauricie.)

A friend of the modern Radisson and Groseilliers autographs his picture on the cover of the December "Beaver." John Sutton, who played Lord Crewe in "Hudson's Bay," visited the Vancouver store in the spring, while taking a short holiday in the city. With him are J. C. Putt, sales manager, and R. E. Standfield, store manager.

London Letter

LONDON—Hudson's Bay House fortunately escaped and damage to Beaver House was negligible during recent heavy raids on the city of London. Considerable damage, however, was done to the adjoining buildings in the block occupied by Beaver House, two of the Company's freehold buildings being, together with several warehouses, completely demolished. Our staff fire patrol, however, again did splendid work and succeeded in keeping the fires out of Beaver House, and we are glad to state that their efforts were acknowledged by the Board of Trade, who awarded a bonus in recognition of the work which resulted in our claim for compensation being considerably less than it otherwise might have been.

Typical of the courageous deeds being enacted almost every day in London was the recent feat of Leading Signalman A. J. Pullen, a member of the Company's staff. One Saturday evening a hundred-pound time bomb fell through the roof of his house in southeast London and buried itself in the floor of one of the upstairs rooms. Pullen realized that when the bomb exploded, the adjoining property, as well as his own house, would be demolished, with loss of life and casualties amongst men, women and children.

Accordingly he borrowed a saw, removed the floor boards from round the bomb, secured a length of strong cable, which he attached to the bomb and then proceeded to drag it out of the house and over the garden railings into the street.

He then hoisted the heavy bomb on his shoulder and carried it as far as he could, the bomb in the meantime continuing to "tick in his ear." At this point he had to borrow a wheelbarrow, on which he wheeled the bomb to a piece of waste ground a quarter of a mile distant where, when it exploded, it could do little damage.

Several of his neighbours offered to assist, but he replied that it was a case of "one dog one bone" and continued on his way, accompanied only by his son Harry, seventeen years of age, who is a junior clerk in our Cold Storage Department. Harry walked behind "in case his father dropped the bomb."

On arrival at the waste ground, Pullen was about to dismantle the bomb when a policeman arrived and escorted him to the police station, where he was fined three pounds for "removing and tampering with a bomb dropped from enemy aircraft"!

The Company has had the pleasure of paying the fine on behalf of Leading Signalman Pullen as a slight indication of their admiration of a gallant deed which, but for the technical infringement of what happens to be the law, might well be regarded as deserving of the award of the George Cross.

Miss G. Neild has joined up with the W.R.N.S. and F. Edney, of the Wholesale Department, has been promoted to commissioned rank.

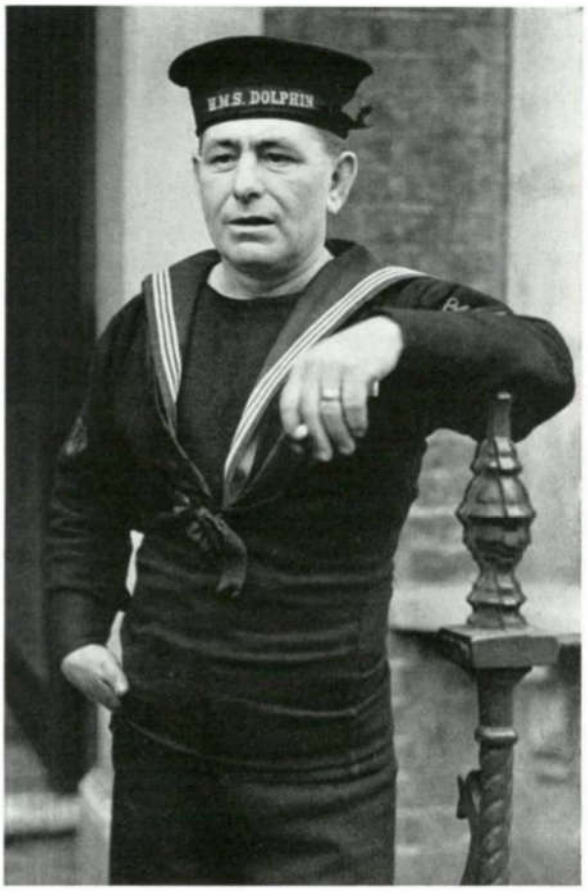
Practically every member of the staff, both men and women, not on active service, is contributing to the National Defence in their spare time as members of the Home Guard, as Air Raid Wardens, in local fire-watching parties, first-aid stations, etc., many of these activities entailing long hours of service during the night.

The Governor, Deputy Governor and members of the Committee, together with a number of the staff, recently enjoyed a private view of the film "Hudson's Bay," by kind permission of the Twentieth Century-Fox Film Company. The film abounds with action, thrills and humour. As it was not possible to arrange for the whole of the staff to attend because of limited accommodation at the studio, the Governor has kindly given instructions for special arrangements to be made for the remaining members of the staff to see the film.

Staff members from Canada who visited Beaver House recently included Lt. J. C. Donald of the R.C.N.V.R. (his second visit), Gunner H. G. M. Cunningham of the R.C.A. (his second visit), L.-Corp. R. T. W. Gargan, R.C.M.P., and Private H. M. Budgell of the Black Watch. Private Budgell distinguished himself last spring by travelling from Voisey's Bay, Labrador, across country to Seven Islands on the St. Lawrence. Gunner Cunningham and L.-Corp. Gargan have both been able to take advantage of the invitation of the Governor and Mrs. Ashley Cooper to visit Hexton Manor, where they recently spent an enjoyable short leave.

ED. NOTE—Copies of Volume III of the Hudson's Bay Record Society were ready to be shipped from the other side during the second week in April; but at the time of going to press, no word had been received of their arrival in Canada.

Bomb-remover Pullen



NOTES from the NORTH

GREEN LAKE, SASK.—Anyone who thinks that the day of the muzzle loader is past has got another think coming—as witness this letter received by a Company post manager:

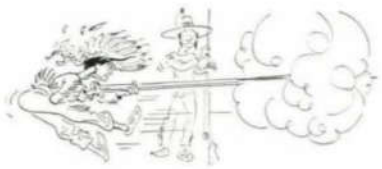
Loon Lake, Sask.,
March 1st, 1941.

The Manager,
Hudson's Bay Company,
Green Lake, Sask.

Dear Sir

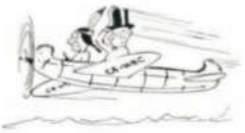
Here I am writing a few words to-day I am wanting to know if you got any Mushloaders yet I don't mean double bar I just wanting know if you got two single bar Mush loader because We can't find any around here and that why if you got any try and lets us know at once because we want Mush loader here awful bad I got one double bar from you once and that was awful good gun thats the kind I want but the only think I want it single bar please answer my letter soon as possible if you can so good by two fellow wants the guns Chief Rat Foot and William Croked Neck

I am your truly
CHIEF RAT FOOT
Loon Lake Reserve



GOLDFIELDS, SASK.—The caribou moved north early this year. Over Easter weekend, the herds began coming into the harbour of this mining town on the north shore of Lake Athabaska. Up the Consolidated Mining road to the camp they ambled, and passed through the town towards Murmac. Last year they did not arrive here until the end of April.

GREAT WHALE RIVER, QUE.—This lonely, icebound post on the east shore of Hudson Bay received a great thrill in March when the big Company Beechcraft, BMI, swooped out of the sky and came to rest near the post buildings. The plane was taking R. H. Chesshire, assistant manager of the Fur Trade Department, and M. Cowan, manager of James Bay District, on a long inspection trip. Starting out from Winnipeg on March 13, BMI had sped eastwards as far as Pointe Bleue, stopping at several posts en route. Then she had headed northeast via historic Rupert's House, and so up the east coast of James and Hudson Bays. From Great Whale River she continued north to Richmond Gulf, then turned and headed for home via Moose Factory and Attawapiskat. Altogether thirty-four posts were visited in twenty-two days. Shades of Sir George!



TELEGRAPH CREEK, B.C.—The post at Telegraph Creek, centre of the famous Cassiar big game district, is now making reservations to outfit big game hunters who are after those record heads. It was in the Cassiar that the world's record Stone sheep was taken in 1931; and in 1939, at the National Championship competition sponsored by the James L. Clark Studios of New York, first prizes for caribou and mountain goat, and both first and second for Dall sheep, were awarded for trophies taken there by hunters outfitted at Telegraph Creek. The moose of the Cassiar are also remarkable for the size of their heads. Other species that are plentiful in this big game paradise are Fannin sheep, and black, brown and grizzly bears. The post manager at Telegraph Creek deals with all enquiries about the hunting, which begins on the first of September.

This Summer, for a Holiday Trip That's Different . . .
Travel DOWN NORTH by Sternwheeler

If you're looking for new travel thrills . . . new scenery . . . new camera subjects . . . you'll enjoy a trip "Down North" from Waterways to the friendly Arctic. Accommodation is comfortable and meals are excellent. Only three trips a year—leaving Waterways June 5, July 17, and August 21. Write now for full particulars to

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY
Mackenzie River Division, Transport Department
10129 103rd St., Edmonton, Alberta

You'll enjoy "By Sternwheeler to the Arctic" in this issue.

FORT GEORGE, QUE.—Getting statistics from the North is no easy job. Returns for the National Registration made last August in the populated parts of Canada have only recently come in from the east coast of James Bay. R. N. Duncan, post manager at Fort George, was the enumerator for his district, which included Eastmain post, 130 miles to the south. His winter-long labours resulted in the registration of only thirty-eight inhabitants, and not until the beginning of April did his returns reach the railhead at Moosonee by dog team.

This year also the Canadian census will be taken, and Government and Company men and missionaries will scatter far and wide through the Arctic, visiting the little camps of the nomad Eskimos. Six months will be allowed them to take the census of the 7,000-odd Eskimos that dwell in Canada's Arctic. As they have no tribal system, like the Indians, each Eskimo will be given an identification disc to facilitate the census taking.

LAC DU BROCHET, MAN.—Great amazement was shown by the Indians when the Armstrong & Low swing from Flin Flon arrived here early in March. Comprising a diesel caterpillar, three sleighs, snow-plough, and caboose, it was the first mechanized swing to be seen here for ten years. On the way back to Flin Flon, a wheel broke at a point some seventy miles south of here, on Reindeer Lake. A radio message for help was sent out, picked up at Island Falls, and relayed to Flin Flon. Repair equipment was at once sent north by air, and three hours after the plane landed near by, the swing was again hitting the trail. Despite the delay, it made the 430-mile trip to Brochet and return in sixteen days.

Transport Limited's horse-drawn swings took supplies about the same time to the posts at Pelican Narrows and South Reindeer Lake. Fourteen tons of building material for the erection of the new store were taken to the latter post.

FORT NELSON, B.C.—Work has been started on a new, fully equipped airport here, some three miles from the post, which will be one of a chain connecting Canada and the States with Alaska. The contractors hauled in overland from Dawson Creek, a distance of nearly four hundred miles, some eight hundred tons of supplies for this project, by tractor train through heavily timbered country, making a new road a large part of the way.

The outfit started out early in February. A native guide was employed to go ahead of the tractor train with dogs, blazing a trail. A bulldozer tractor came along behind the guide, pushing trees, rocks and everything else out of the way. Immediately behind the bulldozer came the haulage tractors, then a fleet of trucks. By the end of March, the road had been built and the goods delivered at Fort Nelson.

A similar airport is being built at Watson Lake, Y.T., some twenty-five miles north of the Lower Post. The supplies for this project are being shipped via Wrangell, Alaska, Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake.

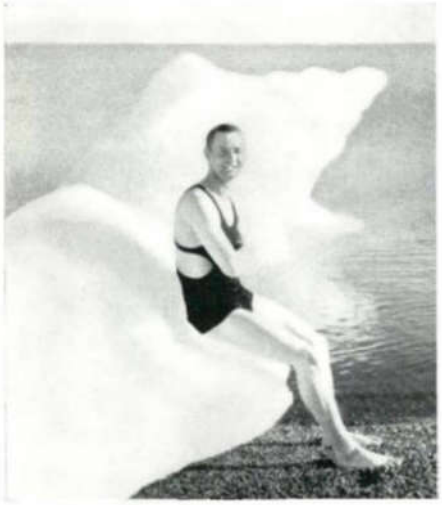
At Dease Lake, three boats and ten barges are being built to handle the freight on the Dease River to Lower Post, and from the latter point it will be hauled overland to Watson Lake.

Another link in the chain of airports to Alaska is being built at Prince George, site of the old Hudson's Bay post of Fort George, where the C.N.R. crosses the Upper Fraser on its way to Prince Rupert.

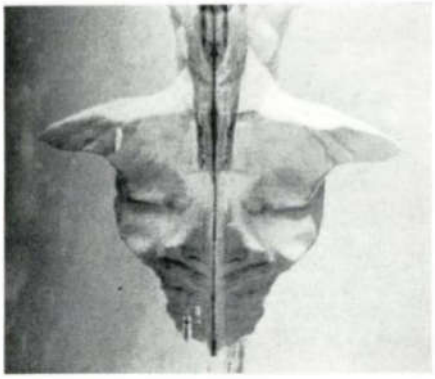
KAPISKO, ONT.—Beaver conservation has made another step forward with the creation of a sanctuary at Kapisko, between the mouths of the Albany and Attawapiskat rivers on James Bay. Under an agreement between the Company and the Ontario Government, a large area has been set aside for five years, and the Company will stock it with beaver from Charlton Island. This, like all islands in James and Hudson Bays, is under the administration of the Northwest Territories, and the Dominion Government has generously allowed the beaver to be taken for the Ontario sanctuary free of charge. The Company has been asked to take over control of the Kapisko sanctuary, and when trapping begins, only Indians will be licensed to take part in it.

Calling All Fur Traders

Eleven thousand *Beaver* readers and their friends are looking forward to your prize story: "My most exciting experience in the Company service." You may *think* there's plenty of time to write it and send it in before the deadline on October 31; BUT—don't say we didn't warn you. And then there's that interesting little detail of cash prizes. . . Even the lowest prize is worth $25—when invested in War Savings Certificates.



Arthur Figgures takes an Arctic dip.



Jack Frost smiles in his sleep.

Slab from a tree carved with the initials of George Simpson and John Rowand on Simpson's trip around the world a century ago. Found by J. Brewster, Banff, where the party camped on Aug. 4. Here the common source of the Columbia and Saskatchewan divides, one branch going to the Pacific, the other to Hudson Bay.

Beauty and the beast. The two daughters of A. Copland sun themselves on a bear skin, at Tuktuk, Western Arctic.

This Indian boy at Montreal Lake, Saskatchewan, has made himself a model 'plane out of birch bark and watap, and a sun visor with the name of the post on it. (Terry Rowe photo.)

Beavers and Company calendars formed part of a special Hudson's Bay Company exhibit recently put on by the Explorers' Club in New York.

Readers' Opinions...

are always interesting—

Here is a cross section of remarks from hundreds of letters received in the past few months.

A Washington University Professor
It's the grandest piece of cheer I know in these alarming times.

A Famous Canadian Artist
A native production that equals the best published anywhere today.

R. G. J., New Orleans
Has been read from cover to cover by a great many of my friends here in the deep south.

Yale University Librarian
I would like to keep a file of it permanently in the Yale University Library.

A Michigan University Professor
It is No. 1 on my magazine list.

A House Wife, Midland, Ont.
The whole family enjoy it and are looking forward to the next copy.

M. M., Excelsior, Minn.
I would not be without *The Beaver* at ten times its cost per year.

G. H. C., Prince Albert, Sask.
As an old Arctic explorer (Peary Expedition 1893-4), I find your magazine very interesting and informative.

J. B., London, Ont.
We send it to a schoolboy nephew in England who writes, "*The Beaver* is the jolliest magazine a fellow can get and quite an eye opener to us."

The Bishop of the Arctic
Second to none.

W. A. N., University of Texas
One of the best ways of cementing lasting friendship between the U.S. and Canada.

An English Colonel
We have enlarged our knowledge of the North land and of its early history: and have found the whole of it enthralling.

A University Professor, Edmonton, Alta.
Have used *The Beaver* on several occasions for authentic information on western and northern Canada.

F. B. E., Richmond, Va.
I have a fight each month retaining it when it arrives.

The Director of a Belgian Seminary
Revue magnifique, sur le Nord, surtout au point de vue illustration.

Civil Engineer, Rochester, N.Y.
It is one of the finest magazines on the continent. It brings us neighbours closer together.

H. J. K., Salisbury Center, N.Y.
It is the cause, perhaps, of the most unrest I have ever, to date, endured!

These comments show that *The Beaver's* appeal is universal. Your friends, too, would like to receive this unique magazine, which has recently won both American and Canadian contests for company publications. It's only a dollar a year. Address *The Beaver*, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, Canada.

The Beaver is printed for the Hudson's Bay Company by Saults & Pollard Limited, Winnipeg, Canada, and the engravings are made by Brigdens of Winnipeg Limited.

AS LATE AS 1710... more than half of this continent appeared on maps as "parts as yet unknown." But known—and treasured—even in those early days, was "the best procurable whisky of Scotland".... then imported only for officers of the Hudson's Bay Company .... today available in both Canada and the United States under the definitive label

HUDSON'S BAY

Best Procurable

SCOTCH WHISKY

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Friends overseas?

. . . Tea is the most welcome gift you can send . . . and the new Overseas *SPITFIRE* package has been especially designed so that you can send tea—simply—safely—and inexpensively. No wrapping is required . . . this durable package travels "as is." Just address it . . . put on the stamps . . . and it's ready to mail.

The *SPITFIRE* package contains Fort Garry Tea—a blend of the finest India and Ceylon Orange Pekoe teas . . . the type of blend favoured in England. Your overseas friends will appreciate this fine tea—send it to them . . . via *SPITFIRE*.

If you live in Western Canada, ask your grocer about this new *SPITFIRE* package. . . . But if you live in Eastern Canada, or the United States, where Fort Garry Tea is not available . . . send us the name and address of your overseas friend . . . 69c for the tea . . . and sufficient postage (12c for men on active service, 24c for civilians)—we'll look after the rest.

Hudson's Bay Company.
INCORPORATED 2nd MAY 1670.
Wholesale Department

VANCOUVER WINNIPEG